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THE MEANING OF BELIEF IN GOD FOR THE LIFE OF TODAY

Robert C. Stanger

There is more confusion about the idea of God in our day than about any other concept of religion. Dr. A. C. McGiffert, formerly president of Union Theological Seminary, quite aptly describes the situation when he says, "We are living in an age which finds it much easier to believe in Jesus than to believe in God." There are many evidences to support this statement. Some weeks ago a numbr of religious leaders, belonging to the group known as "humanists," issued what they called a "Humanist Manifesto," set ting forth the tenets of a "religion without God." Again, observers of the European scene are appalled at the advance of atheism throughout the continent, a conspicuous example of which is, of course, Russia, launching out on one of the greatest social experiments in history on the avowed basis of a denial of God. Wherever state churches are being overthrown today as in Spain or Mexico, atheism is gaining a great foothold. One of the most significant insights embodied in the Laymen's Report on Foreign Missions, "Re-thinking Missions," is that the basic issue in our day is not whether Christianity or Buddhism or any other religious system is to win out, but as to whether any kind of religion is to maintain itself over against the rising tide of secularism apparent everywhere today. Belief in God and in a spiritual order are on trial. The forces opposed to Christian theism are not merely negative and destructive in their approach, but are trying to present their case in a positive and constructive way. Witness the interesting presentation of the case for non-theistic humanism by Prof. M. C. Otto of the University of Wisconsin in the Christian Century "Conversa-

tions about God." He is not content with a denial of the existence of God, but presents the "affirmation of the non-existence of God," which gives the whole matter a new and ominous turn. The series of articles in the "Christian Century" just referred to presented "Conversations" on the question of the existence of God engaged in by three outstanding philosophers of our day: Prof. Wieman of Chicago, Prof. Macintosch of Yale and Prof. Otto of Wisconsin. They are an indication of the cruciality of the problem in the world of thought today. They are an evidence of the "crisis" in the midst of which religion finds itself. The discussions embodied in the "Christian Century" articles impressed the average reader with their evident futility. The discussions were undoubtedly profound and brilliant, and quite worthy of their distinguished proponents, but as might be expected they left the reader, after this intellectual excursion, just about where he was when he started. The problem of God for the average person is not primarily intellectual or philosophical but practical. The discussions did not meet the real problems of average folk. They did not "strike us where we live."

Any person who essays to write about "God" needs to approach his work with profound humility. The writer wishes to approach the subject in that spirit. This paper is not an attempt at a philosophical defense of the idea of God nor an endeavor to argue the existence of God. Such a task is left to more capable hands. The attempt is to be made here to suggest a working idea of God for our own day, and to present such considerations as a pastor would offer to thoughtful and perplexed people in his congregation or community. Just what reasons can we offer for "the faith that is in us?" Just what does faith in God mean in plain, matter-of-fact, every-day language? The disconcerting thing about this whole matter is not that people have outlawed God or have argued him out of existence, but that to so many the idea of God no longer seems relevant or significant. And yet the great message of religion is the ancient burden of God: "Oh God, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God." This faith cannot be given up without infinite and irretrievable loss.

Some of the reasons why faith in God has suffered eclipse are apparent. For many religion today is a second-hand experience, not a primary experience. Prof. Van Dusen in his recent book "The Plain Man Seeks for God" describes the trend of religion during the last few generations. The religion for the generation just past was the result of the pietism and the great experience of the 19th century. The religion of the second gneration, those in older middel life, is a secure possession on the basis of the creative ex-

perience of the parents. The religion of the older young people today is a second-hand experience based more largely on loyalty to the past than on personal conviction. The children of today, while sent to Sunday school, show little tendency of becoming vitally religious. So religious inheritance, says Dr. Van Dusen, is like financial fortune; accumulated by the first generation, enjoyed by the second, dissipated by the third, and lost to the fourth. A vital idea of God for our day waits upon a new and profoundly shaking experience. Vital belief in God is further vitiated by the superficiality of modern life. A generation which contents itself with mere "things" and which craves the surface satisfactions of material goods above all else is scarcely in a position to appreciate the reality of God. Here "deep calleth unto deep," and the deep things of God are apprehended by the deep things in man. "Spiritual things are spiritually perceived." We may as well admit that to a person who has no needs above the physical and material there is little or nothing which religion can supply. We can live superficially without any conscious relation to God. Thousands are doing it today. It is for that reason that a crisis experience often turns people to God and the things of the spirit, because in the crisis they face reality and come to grips with reality. It is a fact that God is most real to us when our "reality sense" is keenest. (We have "a reality sense"—when we seem to be most ourselves, our real selves.) This accounts for the evident fact of history that times of crisis, rather than days of prosperity, have been productive of the most vital religion.

Then too the growing measure of power that has come into the possession of man through science and technology have served to undermine faith in God. Primitive man, face to face with a failing harvest and unproductive fields, lifted up his hands to the Powers above and implored the gift of fertility for his acres. Today he turns to irrigation and the latest scientific fertilizer if his land is unproductive. Early man was exposed to the mercy of the elements and sought refuge in an appeal to the Power or Powers in control. Today man builds his shelter of brick and concrete and defies the elements. Our loaves of bread are multiplied by our bakeries and the only miracles we recognize are the miracles of the machine. We clothe ourselves with goods made by our machines, and feed ourselves with food obtained by our own skill. How great is man! He flaunts himself in his seeming omnipotence. It is not until he grapples with the moral problem and faces the sinister power of evil, not until he faces the ultimate mystery of things that he recognizes his impotence and his need of re-enforcement. It is significant that among scientists today it is the astronomers and certain of the physicists who are most inclined to theism, because

they are more aware than the rest of the magnitude and mystery and infinitude of the universe. So it is that the idea of God becomes dim to the proud man, but becomes luminous to the humble heart.

Such then are some of the factors which stand in the way of a vital idea of God today. If faith in God is man's greatest spiritual asset, as we have claimed, it may be well to consider some of the practical values contained in the belief in God for our day. Just what does faith in God mean for human life, stated in simple and practical terms? We begin with the idea of God as a source of power. One need hardly say that the word "Power" is one of the characteristic words of religion. This also gives us a point of contact with the best of modern scientific thought. It is a commonplace of modern physics that what we call "matter" is in reality only a manifestation of "energy". The foundation of our universe is energy, an intangible, yet ever-present and ever-working power. No claim is here made that modern science or modern physics offers us a proof of demonstration of God. The existence of God cannot be proved or demonstrated. It must be discovered. It would be an entire misuse of the pronouncements of Eddington and Jeans to seize upon them as proofs of the existence of God and a spiritual order, as seems to be the fashion in some quarters. But there is no denying the fact that their findings can serve as a mighty reenforcement to our faith, and that they offer us convenient categories of thought. Just as we know electrical power and energy by its effects, so we know spiritual power and energy by what it does. To believe in God is to make contact with the source of moral and spiritual power. A search through the literature of vital religion will reveal that faith in God has always meant new increments of power and spiritual re-enforcement. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. He giveth power to the faint, and to him who hath no power he increaseth strength." Without God we are dependent upon our own resources alone. How valuable it is to know that there are limitless reserves of power available for us to re-enforce our lives. The experience of Tolstoy is interesting in this connection. He tells in his "Confessions," that there was a time when life had become meaningless for him. Literary activities brought him no release and the deep weariness of life weighed heavily upon him. There were times when he contemplated suicide, and he hid all cords in his home lest he hang himself in an unguarded moment. He consorted with the peasants, who faced life simply and bravely and elementally, and tried to find the secret of their lives. The crisis came during a walk in the forest. He noticed that when he harbored the thought of God new energies came to him and life took on meaning. Suddenly he stopped; "I need only to be aware of God to live; I need only to forget him

and I die." "What more do you seek?, exclaimed a voice within me: This is He. God is that without which one cannot live. To know God and to live is one and the same thing." "God is He without whom one cannot live,"—that upon which we depend, that which sustains life, the power upon which we rest. Define that power as you will and conceive of it as you may, you cannot escape its reality. We have here at least a minimum idea of God. Faith in God means power for life.

In the second place, faith in God gives *meaning to life.* Is life just a weary round of existence or is it going somewhere? Are we just moving, or are we moving in a certain direction? Is all of our toil and effort, our struggle and moral effort mere shadow-play, or does it achieve anything significant or valuable? It there any meaning or purpose to life? Perhaps the best illustration of what life without God means can be found in the writings of those who hold to this view. Perhaps the classical expression of it is to be found in the famous essay by Bertrand Russell entitled—"A Free Man's Worship," as lovely in style as it is tragic in meaning. He holds that we are put here against our wishes, in a universe apparently meaningless and in a world which will eventually destroy us and our most cherished values.

"Brief and powerles is Man's Life: on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way. For man, condemned today to lose his dearest, tomorrow himself to pass through the gate of darkness, it remains only to cherish, 'ere yet the glow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day."

Thus the logical implication of this point of view leads to the philosophy of despair. All that remains for us to do is to whistle in the dark to keep up our courage. Or let anyone read Joseph Wood Krutch's book— "The Modern Temper" to see the logical outworking of this view of life and the world. To him all human values are illusory and existence itself is futile. He speaks of the "inevitable realization that living is a merely physiological process with only a physiological meaning, and that it is most satisfactorily conducted by creatures who never feel the need to give it any other. —Formerly he (man) had believed in even his darkest moments that the universe was rational, if only he could grasp its rationality, but gradually he comes to suspect that rationality is an attribute of himself alone and that there is no reason to suppose that his own life has any more meaning than the life of the humblest insect that crawls from one annihilation to another.—Ours is a lost cause and there is not place for us in the natural universe; but we are not, for all that, sorry to be human. We should rather die as men than

live as animals." Again the note of frustration, and the final appeal to bravery in the face of the bleak darkness.

Over against this view stands the great insight and conviction of religion, embodied in the belief in God, that we are living in a universe that cares for the highest and deepest things of experience, that the things which are valuable to us are of value to the universe, and that our values are grounded in the nature of things. To believe in God means to be convinced that at the heart of things is something that is essentially right; that when we do the right and launch out upon moral endeavor we are in line with the central purpose of things, and that the whole thrust of reality comes out in support of the right. We believe that there is a moral order upon which we can depend, and that he who works for love and truth and goodness has the universe on his side; that the very nature of things is so, and that these values are grounded in reality. The Spirit at the heart of things is the ground and support of the highest values, and at the same time conserves and guarantees these highest values to us. While it is true that we can never absolutely prove this to be true, and that this affirmation is always an act of *faith,* yet it is not a blind faith. Just as we cannot finally prove that there are atoms or electrons or cosmic energy or ether, yet nature behaves so that man is constrained to accept them, so we cannot finally prove that the highest values are grounded in the nature of things, yet the universe behaves as though they were, and the best type of life is produced on this basis. In this way life comes to have meaning and value. Prof. William P. Montague in his "Belief Unbound" sums up the matter in this way:

"If God is not, then the existence, of all that is beautiful and in any sense good, is but the accidental and ineffectual by-product of blindly swirling atoms, or of the equally unpurposeful, though more conceptionally complicated, mechanisms of present-day physics. A man may believe that this dreadful thing is true. But only the fool will say in his heart that he is glad that it is true. For to wish there should be no God is to wish that the things which we love and strive to realize and make permanent, should be only temporary and doomed to frustration and destruction. Atheism leads not to badness but only to an incurable sadness and loneliness."

All of this leads us to consider a third value implied in our belief in God. It gives *security* to life. Argue the point as we may we cannot escape the fact that one of life's deepest desires is the craving for security. It is one of man's elemental "wishes." We know how true this is in the economic sphere, and how sinister a problem this presents to the modern world. This is true about the life of man in all its aspects. The one factor which keeps so

many people from riding in an aeroplane is the sense of insecurity, the fear that the atmosphere will not support them or hold them. Once we know that the air can and does support us when we give ourselves to it and comply with its laws flying loses all of its terror. The tremendous contribution which a vital faith makes to life is the sense of buoyancy which it gives. To know that life will not let you finally drop if you launch out upon it and conform to its laws, that the universe will not let you go, that is the experience embodied in that classic expression of faith: "The Everlasting God is thy refuge and underneath thee are the Everlasting Arms." So faith in God gives to us a new source of confidence and security. It takes away from us also the unutterable loneliness of a Godless universe, where one finds cold comfort in the words of Prof. Otto: "We have only ourselves, you know." It gives to us the sense of a Cosmic Companionship, the feeling that we are not alone in the universe, and gives point to the definition of religion by Prof. Whitehead: "Religion is what man does with his solitariness."

We have briefly considered some of the difficulties confronting belief in God in the modern day, and have tried to point out some of the values contained in this belief. Prof. Van Dusen contends that the main question is not: "Does God exist?", but "What is He like?" It would lead us far afield and carry us beyond the limits of this paper to try to sketch in any systematic way the elements which would enter into an idea of God for our day. There are however several considerations which are pertinent in this connection. In the first place any conception of God which is to be vital must be expressed in relation to the chief areas of human experience. Let us give only one example. When we consider that belief in God as expressed in the Bible and as held for centuries was expressed in terms of the old cosmology we can realize the problem which is raised by the passing of this ancient view of the world and the rise of an entirely new cosmology. Modern science is very young and only gradually is the old cosmology which held sway for thousands of years giving way to the new, so that consciously or unconsciously the rank and file of people are coming to think of the world in which they live in radically new terms, especially since the processes of general education are so thoroughly imbuing the rising generation with the scientific outlook. Fiat creation gives way to the idea of processes; a power without to energies resident within the process; the idea of order and continuity precludes any caprice or intervention from without. It is not strange then that time-honorod conceptions of God make little or no appeal in many quarters. This is not alarming, but only indicates that we need to interpret God in terms that are familiar to our day. Indeed it is not the idea of God which is at issue, but the framework through which we ex-

press it. Just as a more naive view of nature declared the glory of God, so now the new cosmology and the new physics "showeth forth his handiwork." We see God in the unchanging and underlying conditions which give to the world order and rationality, and in the immanent force or drive and in the upward and directive urge which gives the suggestion of purpose. We can see a creative world-progress, living, throbbing and moving, instinct with Life and Power and Intelligence. For anyone who wishes to follow this line of thought further we can only recommend the reading of Van Dusen's "The Plain Man Seeks for God," where the new views of the world as given to us by science are carefully examined and evaluated from the point-of-view of theism. To follow the line of thought further it would be interesting to see how our thought of God is affected by the *impersonal* character of the society in which we live, with the prominence given to mechanism and technology. Suffce it to say that a vital idea of God will serve as a criticism of such an order of things, and that belief in a personal God is the best guarantee of the value of human life, the best assurance of the supreme and lasting worth of persons.

In the second place our idea of God must be an interpretation of *all* of our experience, not only of one segment of it. Reality comes to us in two ways. We come face to face with the world of objective facts, such as science and history present to us. We cannot escape them, we cannot blink them. The facts of nature and the world are there and we must face them. But that is not all there is. Facts come to us through the screen of personal experience as an experience of *values*. The facts have meaning for us. We interpret them. There are then two methods of apprehending reality. Through observation, analysis, etc., we arrive at objective facts. Through intuition, appreciation, etc., we arrive at an experience of values. The scientist and the modern man in general are always in danger of stopping halfway. To do so may often mean that we miss God entirely. It is only as we become aware of the realm of values as well that God becomes real and vital to us. An excessive preoccupation with tangibles alone obscures for us the intangibles— love, goodness, character, which are just as real as any objective fact of nature. It is only as we take the whole of reality into acount that we can have a real experience of God.

Our best clue as to the nature of God comes to us from life itself, and from life in its highest expression, i.e. human life. And in human life we would find it in the best life. That is why the life of Jesus is and remains for us the highest revelation of the nature and character of God. Today, as of old, to know Him is to know the Father. A world that produced a life like His is not hopeless, but has at the heart of it Goodness and Love.

In conclusion it should be pointed out that belief in God is not primarily a problem of speculative thought, but something to live by. The reality of God does not wait in the last analysis upon our intellectual apprehension or formulation of the idea of God. If that were true then only the most intelligent could know Him. Valuable as all these intellectual considerations are, they are not primary. God is immediately and surely discoverable in experience. Not keenness of intellect but quality of life offers the best road to Him. The way to the fullest understanding of God is through full, noble, creative living.

THE DENOMINATIONAL COLLEGE

A. A. Susott

The day of the denominational college is past—unless this type of school ceases to regard itself as a competitor of the state supported institution and actively concerns itself with the particular contribution which it alone can make. Heretofore the denominational school has engaged in such competition, it has endeavored to ape the state schools and universities, it has looked solely upon academic results, and has overlooked its own purpose of developing Christian character and furthering the work of the denomination. It is today in great danger of losing what little religious emphasis it has heretofore retained. To lose the denominational college would be a catastrophe, for there is no other instrument of higher education in the hands of the church. Because the work is so vital, the problems presented by the present situation need to be seriously considered and the challenge adequately met. Not that any individual will have the complete answer, one would not even be able to state the problem in all its ramifications. It requires the concentrated thought and the whole-hearted co-operation of many before the problem can be solved. It will require a certain amount of planning and experimentation before definite objectives and ways of attaining them can be finally set up—if ever there is such a thing as finality in such a matter as this. The solution will not be found and applied by any one college or denomination alone, it is admittedly a question that vexes all religious bodies having schools of higher education, and the solution will come only as they work with each other.

There was a time when the state concerned itself very little about education in general, and still less about education in the college. The assumption by the state of the entire educational plan has been gradual. Today there is no field—except the religious—left untouched by the state in its endeavor to control the education of every individual. The state-supported system of public schools drove out most of the parochial schools, the state-supported system of high schools rendered the great majority of academies obsolete, and today the state-supported system of colleges and universities is making hard times for the denominational college. For the state can offer cheaper, and in a sense better, education than any college that is dependent upon the gifts of individual numbers of a given church body. It can offer cheaper education because the tuition costs are met by taxes imposed by the state upon the whole population or wealth of the state. It can offer better education in the academic sense because it is seldom hampered by lack of funds for the things it really needs or the teachers it really wants. It can

offer a greater appeal for the simple reason that it is a natural continuation of a system of education begun in the public school.

In addition to all this, which is already an accomplished fact, the state, in its endeavor to give equal educational opportunities to all, is experimenting with junior colleges in some of the larger centers of population. If the depression had not come when it did, cutting short the income of the state, the establishment of such junior colleges would have proceeded much faster than we are willing to believe. The effect of such action would be to drive out of existence virtually every small denominational college. In a few years it would be accepted as self-evident that the state provide this education. And from the junior college it would be only a step to the fully established senior college. This picture may appear impossible to some, but a careful study of the history of education in our own country will bear out the possibility if not indeed the probability of every statement made. Looking at it from another angle, if the present situation of no work for the youth continues to exist, the state will need to provide something else to occupy his attention until he can become a wage-earner. Unless indeed we are willing to grant the state the further privilege of compulsory military training for those youths from eighteen to twenty-one years of age. Belittling a given problem does not make it less difficult of solution. The record of the denominational college in the past is so good that those who are concerned with its future are inclined to minimize the forces being arrayed against it today.

Because it is in a position to do so, the state has not hesitated to set up certain academic standards, which every college, that desires recognition for its students, must meet. The hands of the state have been strengthened by certain denominational colleges which were for the time being in a favored position, both academically and financially. Instead of helping the cause of the denominational college generally they have endeavored to build up a certain prestige for themselves, even though that meant a weakening of the cause as a whole. In spite of their pretense of being a help, of furthering the whole cause of denominational or religious education, their action has actually succeeded in strengthening the position of the state-supported schools. The full consequences of this action are not yet seen, when it does become evident they will find that they have worked harm to themselves as well as to others. Certainly academic standards are necessary, but they cannot be made the chief objective of the denominational college. Adequate financial backing is also important, but again, the college cannot make this its chief theme.

Instead of trying to compete with the state universities, the denominational college needs to inquire concerning its own pos-

sible peculiar contribution to the cause of education. Does it actually have nothing else to offer than the state school? If it does not, then it is foolish for the average man to continue his contributions to a denominational college, for he is already, through his taxes, supporting a state institution. It is the conviction of many that the denominational college needs to examine itself, to ask what special contribution it is making or can make, to discover whether or not it has an excuse for existing. What right does it have to ask for money and more money when the state can do the same job better and cheaper?

Just here lies the crux of the problem. The state cannot do the same work the denominational college can do, for religion has no part in the present organization of state education. It will probably be a long time before the state concerns itself in the least about religion in education. It is today trying to work out some basis for character education, but even here its attempts are half-hearted, it feels itself defeated before it has begun. For it is unfortunately true that to know the good is not necessarily to do the good, and there is no adequate motivation within the reach of the state schools for leading the good life. Academically and financially the denominational college cannot compete with the state college, hence it must devote itself to that which it can do and the state school cannot: it must devote itself to the development of Christian character, and to the interests of religion in life, in addition to the attempt to give to the graduating student a satisfactory scholastic standing.

The denominational college is supported in the main by a group of people united into an organization for the furtherance of their religious interests. This college owes to its constituency an honest endeavor to further the work of the group. It cannot repudiate its obligation to further the cause of the denomination without being untrue to itself and unfaithful to its trust. It owes to the supporting body a large measure of its time and ability. It is all very well to speak of the greater contribution to the good of the world at large, which the college should make, but such a contribution becomes possible through the recognized family group, rather than by ignoring or even rejecting it. This therefore is the first question which the denominational college must ask itself: "What contribution can I make to the people of the denomination which I represent, in order to justify the expense of my existence?"

A surprisingly large number of people are looking for genuinely Christian schools to which they can send their young people. In many instances they are willing to overlook denominational lines entirely in the hope of finding a school that is genuinely Christian. The desire to establish and strengthen Christian char-

acter is powerfully present. Naturally, people do not expect the state college to make much of a contribution in this respect. Generally speaking, the environment of the state college is better than usually pictured. But there is an element of chance there which should not be present to such an extent in the denominational college, because it is possible for the latter to exercise a stricter supervision over the activities of its students and to be more careful in the selection of the student body. The denominational college owes something to the Christian people as such, hence a second question it must ask itself is this: "Am I furthering the cause of Christianity and Christian character generally?"

There is an admitted lack in education today which seemingly cannot be met by ordinary scholastic procedure. Higher education is good, but when it is not controlled it only leads to greater evil. The capacity for evil as well as for good is increased by higher education. There is a theory that the mass of people should receive very little education for the simple reason that there is constant temptation to misuse it. The answer lies, not in depriving large numbers of people of education, but in fitting the individual for the proper use and control of the education he has acquired. What right has any institution to educate if it does not at the same time inculcate moral standards that will lead to the beneficent use of what has been learned? A third question which the denominational college must therefore ask itself is this: "Am I making it possible for the individual to use his education profitably, not only for himself, selfishly, but also for others, unselfishly?"

Students naturally expect that the work which they do should be generally recognized by other schools. Certain academic standards are therefore necessary, even though it must be admitted that true education cannot be measured in terms of scholastic achievement. In order to attract students it is necessary for the denominational college to have an academic rating that is satisfactory to the prospective student. This is considered as the first and most important question by most schools and many people. People who so consider it may at once withdraw from any support of the denominational college, for it can never hope to rival the state college in this respect. The state itself can make this impossible, and has in the past not hesitated to do so. Denominational colleges which give this question first consideration might as well close their doors, for they are fighting a losing battle. Except for a few heavily endowed schools, the attempts to meet the state institutions in this respect are impossible. Therefore the fourth question the denominaional college needs to ask itself is this: "To what extent am I responsible for the setting up and meeting of certain academic standards?"

This last question might seem out of place, for after all, the state leads in setting requirements. But it does not have the whole authority. It is also true that the denominational colleges are in a position to enforce certain standards of their own, and it is quite possible for this loosely organized group to exert pressure upon the state institutions in regard to these requirements. Standards need not be lowered, but there are certain changes necessary, and the substitution of one subject for another in the recognized curriculum is quite possible. If today certain essential subjects and activities are crowded out of the program of the average denominational college, it is because the organization has permitted this to take place, and it need continue for only so long as the group wishes. The first step in the salvation of the denominational college for continued usefulness must come from the unselfish co-operation of the federation of colleges itself.

It is not the purpose of this article to go into detail concerning the possible solutions of the various questions listed. A series of books might be published on the subject, and still leave considerable room for argument. Yet there are certain things that seem to the writer self-evident and essential if the denominational college is to meet the challenge of today. It seems odd for instance that a denominational college should offer prominently all sorts of departments, and then have an exceedingly weak department of religion. Yet that is true of denominational colleges generally. There are some notable exceptions, and they prove what this writer contends, namely, that people expect a strong department of religion in a denominational school. The answer to the questions cannot be found apart from the recognition of the importance of such a department of religion.

Doubtless there will be immediate and vociferous objection on the score that it is not so much what is taught as how it is taught that is important. The contention is quite frequently made that the spirit of the institution means more than anything that is taught within the four walls of the class room. There is some truth in that. So long as the student is in the institution he is under the constant influence of that prevailing spirit. But it is just as true that when he leaves his college behind him he tends to forget that spirit, and needs something else as the mainstay of right living. Any subject can be so taught that it helps the student to right living, and any subject, including the Bible and religion, can be so manhandled as to make for poorer living. But that is no excuse for rejecting the Bible and religious interests and emphasizing the other parts of the curriculum, as is all too frequently the case today. I venture the assertion that if the average member of a denomination knew how little Bible and how little positive religion is being taught in

the average college, he would immediately withdraw his support. He gives because he thinks he is furthering the cause of religion and of his own denomination, while in too many instances he is only furthering the cause of secular education.

In establishing a strong department of religion, the denominational college would be in a position to make its own particular and special contribution to the cause of education generally. This department would need to be responsible for a number of things. First of all, it would be responsible for certain courses in Bible and religious education. Bible courses can be taught so that they are interesting and at the same time contribute to an understanding and appreciation of Christianity, and serve as an inspiration for better living. The student can thus be made more acutely aware of God and more appreciative of his Christian heritage than in any other way. It is a recognized fact that the church is far behind the state in the matter of education. The state has been concerned about the education of its citizens for quite some time, the church is not now concerned about such education for its members. Antiquated methods, the remains of a once vital interest in religious education, are still in use almost everywhere—largely because the denominational college has not concerned itself about this problem of educating for Christian living. If there is ever to be improvement in the religious education methods of the church body, the impetus and the guidance must come from those who are trained in the Christian college. The state cannot be expected to concern itself about education in religion. It is here that the college can make its contribution to the denomination which it represents, and from which its support comes. The church body is largely dependent upon the leadership of its educated laity. If that leadership fails, the denomination is weakened, if it is cognizant of opportunity and possibilities, and if it knows the best method to be employed, the denomination is strengthened.

This department of religion would concern itself about the student's life generally. It would further those activities that make for Christian living, it would discourage those that are in any way harmful. The student can be given an opportunity to discuss religion and its place in life; through directed activity he can find a natural outlet for his desire for religious expression. It would need to provide for many things not found in the regular routine or printed program of the college. It would exercise a certain supervision over the social contacts, it would provide healthful recreation. There is hardly a more pitiful sight on earth than the college-trained individual who is at a loss to entertain himself without resorting to questionable means. It will place in the student's reach ample opportunities for worship, and will provide ways

and means whereby his understanding and appreciation of God is deepened and intensified. It will seek to guide him in his personal problems, and will endeavor to lead him into right paths rather than to force him into certain accepted modes of conduct or to accept certain forms of thought. Always it will present religion as something vital and alive, not as something insipid and bossy. Only so can the denominational college hope to justify its existence to the many followers of Jesus who look to it for the development of Christian character and Christian standards of living.

The selfish use of education is what has put the world in its present desperate plight. And educators have furthered the opinion that to be educated means to be placed in a position of advantage over those less well equipped to wrest from life the desired things. In place of considering the education a trust to be used for others as well as for self, it is considered a personal advantage to be used to the full. Secular or state education has no answer to the problem of adequate motivation for unselfish use of talents. The state itself with its well-developed spoils system is scarcely a fit tutor in regard to the right use of special privilege. It is true that often enough the acts of grossest selfishnes masquerade in the guise of religion, but that is possible only because so few people recognize real religion when they see it. The denominational college alone is in a position to provide motives that are sufficient for life. They alone can work against the deterioration of morals and the lack of righteousness that are the result of selfishness. They alone are in a position to expose selfishness and show the value of self-forgetfulness, or even of the sacrifice of the self. Nothing has yet been found to take the place of genuine religion, and the denominational school alone, of all our higher institutions of learning, is in a position to stress religion in addition to the regular curriculum.

This then is the task of the denominational college, to develop in the students a religious consciousness, to make them religious minded, to help them enter into right relationship with God so that they in turn might help others into that relationship. It is never easy to develop the necessary God-consciousness, yet it is the one essential task that faces the faithful college. Everything else can be taught as well or better in the state-supported university. The emphasis of the college must be placed upon that thing which the state university cannot give. Only so can it expect the support of the people, only so can it attract a desirable student body, only so can it make its own contribution to the cause of education, only so can it further the denominational life, only so can it further the cause of Christianity through which it was called into being and to which it owes its existence. If the denominational college will

only recognize and assume its obligations toward those who gave it being, if it will only be faithful to those whose money it spends, it cannot fail to make a worth while and lasting contribution to the cause of higher education. Teachers with a religious consciousness are needed in our public schools today, and the denominational college is in a favored position to develop and strengthen that consciousness. The business world needs men and women who are distinctly aware of their opportunities and obligations, individuals who have the strength of character to sacrifice some of their own prerogatives in order that the general standard of living might be raised. The professions need both men and women who will see beyond their own narrow gain to the help they can give the multitudes. As Christ looked out upon the multitudes and had compassion with them, so do we need today many individuals who see these same multitudes, still in great need, and pour out their strength and their talents in the endeavor to help them. The whole world with its pressing social, economic, moral and other problems is sadly in need of a compassion that is active. And as Jesus gathered his disciples and prepared them to meet the need of the world, as they in turn gathered others and prepared them, so the denominational college of today can and should carry on that work of preparing men and women to see and meet the world's need.

IN WHAT DIRECTION SHOULD OUR MISSIONARY STRATEGY BE CHANGED?

By Rev. Askan Stueler, D.D.

(Paper read at the Nebraska District Conference)

I

Introduction

"Strategy" is a military term. It designates the science of military position, the combination and employment of means on a broad scale for gaining advantage in war; it means generalship but is distinguished from "Tactics." The latter is the science of military evolution, especially the art of handling troops in the presence of the enemy. Accordingly, missionary strategy would mean: "Selecting the field and getting the missionary forces into advantageous position,' 'while the word missionary tactics is equivalent to "successful operation of the missionary forces on the field itself." In the light of these definitions and distinctions it seems obvious that the wording of the subject assigned to us is rather vague and loose, as there can be no doubt that the study, and treatment as to possible changes, of the whole missionary enterprise, its objectives, endeavors and practices, was intended by our denominational headquarters. Furthermore, the question as it is put implies a priori that changes must be made. This is unfair to one who seeks to treat this matter impartially and conscientiously. It might be that a thorough investigation would not reveal the need for any changes at all. Therefore we take the liberty of making a slight alteration, not of the intent and purpose, but of the wording of the theme to be considered and try to find an answer to the question: "Should our missionary methods be changed? If so, what changes are to be made?"

It is to be regretted that so little time was given for such an important, extensive, searching appraisal of the missionary work, and that also the space and time for the presentation of our findings are too limited. If this is borne in mind it will readily be understood that our treatise cannot concern itself with minor details but must necessarily be restricted to the essentials of missions. It will further be recognized that, on account of the limitations indicated, lengthy argumentation will in most cases have to give way to terseness of statement. Naturally, this necessity of elimination and condensation is bound to have a somewhat marring effect on our presentation.

The word Mission means the act of sending or the state of being sent, as on some service. Therefore it is synonymous with

Task. In its ecclesiastical application it has suffered violence at the hands of many, and multitudinous are its definitions, some of them spurious, some of them incomplete, some fairly comprehensive. A definition with which no doubt we can all agree is found in our Evangelical Catechism under question 92: "The Mission of the Church is to extend the Kingdom of God, that is, to lead men to Christ and to establish Christian principles in every relation of life." While this definition does not contain certain time-honored theological terms, it can easily be proved that it is Biblical and comprehensive in its scope. It sets forth the God-given task of the Church in all her endeavors and branches of labor, including the work within any established parish. Though, however, there is no essential difference in the objectives of Christian effort inside and outside the congregation, we have long been accustomed to distinguish between congregational work and mission work and further divide the latter itno Home and Foreign Missions. It is at present not our intention to deviate from the custom, and so we propose to survey, briefly, at first the mission field at home and then the foreign field as to the advisability of changes or the shifting of emphasis.

Home Missions

The Annual Report of our Board for Home Missions seems to indicate a wholesome tendency on the part of the Board to correct former mistakes and to avoid similar ones in the future. This is very gratifying, and we trust that the new note which has been struck will expand into a glorious harmony of spiritual music to enchant and attract to Christ an ever-increasing number of the unfortunate millions in our country who are still in darkness and sin and without the hope of eternal salvation, light and life. The report suggests that "our effort should be directed more largely than heretofore toward awakening a greater and more challenging sense of missionary obligation in our Synod." Asking for cooperation in cultivating mission-mindedness the Board makes the following recommendations which amount to actual changes in our missionary policy or involve at least a definite shift of emphasis:

1. Exercise the missionary and evangelistic powers of pastor and membership in the local neighborhood. Be merciful and helpful to the fallen, win souls, conduct Sunday schools in outlying sections where the need is agreed to by the District Board, without expecting the help of the Mission Board.

2. Teach missions regularly. Train the young in missionary attitudes of human sympathy, faith in the possibilities of the unfortunate, belief in God's willingness and eagerness to be the Good Shepherd to all. Keep people well informed on historic and current missions.

3. In raising the budget be as frank and courageous as Jesus would be in challenging people to support the work with their money. Raise the budget. Aim to get a much larger percentage of the membership to give toward the budget.

These recommendations should be heeded by all ministers and spiritual leaders in our congregations. They are based on the fact of a great and crying need which the report expresses in these words: "We are not confused in these times of many voices. The one thing men need and want is primarily, not good advice, but the good news of the love and grace of God that has come to us in the person of Jesus Christ, our Lord. To persuade men through word and deed: this is our task. And the King's business requires haste." The third of these recommendations, however, would be carried out more cheerfully and efficiently if a more equitable method could be devised for determining the budget quotas. At present they are decided upon on the basis of membership, which frequently results in a larger congregation with a poor membership not being able to raise its quota, while a smaller but richer church has no difficulty in remitting the required contribution toward the synodical household. Not numbers but ability to pay should determine the quota. We believe that such a change—or another better and more just way—would produce wonders and result in a larger and more adequate financial support of our missionary enterprise at home and abroad.

What the report of the Board has to say about home missions in the changing city, in rural districts and among the underprivileged, about city mission work and the Seamen's Home is very interesting and praiseworthy. It calls forth our earnest and heartfelt prayer of thanksgiving as well as intercession. Nevertheless, there are a few more suggestions of changes in policy and practice which we should like to make. We learn with satisfaction that a Guide Book of Home Missions has been prepared and submitted to the Home Missions Conference held last summer, and that the Committee of the Board has done further work on the book. It seems to us that the Board would do wisely if it would await and study the various recommendations which will grow out of the discussions, such as this one, assigned for presentation at the district conferences, before this re-statement of rules and policies governing the work is given final shape for submission to the General Conference.

On the whole we have no fault to find with the personnel of our home mission field. The Board itself is full of appreciation and praise for the men engaged in this sacrifice-requiring work. But it cannot be denied that in many cases the work has been hampered, or has not progressed in as large a measure as conditions justified us to expect, because the missionary was too young and

inexperienced. This is in no sense to be construed as a reflection on the character, ability and faithfulness of the young men. They have done their very best but were handicapped by the lack of experience. As it is generally a mistake for a large congregation to call to the pastorate a young man who was just graduated from the seminary, so it is a far more serious mistake to send a graduate from Eden—or any other seminary—directly into a home mission field. The first is detrimental to the proper development of the man, the second is not conducive to the work itself. Yet both kinds of mistake we have to a large extent been guilty of in the past. There are, of course, notable exceptions like, for instance, Rev. Kraemer in Buffalo who recently celebrated his 50th anniversary as Pastor of a good-sized, self-supporting and influential church which he started as a small mission congregation when he was a young minister. Other cases of successful young missionaries could be quoted. But as a rule, it would promote efficiency and progress, and prevent costly delay, if only pastors with several years of experience in the ministry—and, of course, otherwise qualified—would be called to the difficult and important task of laboring among the neglected, unconverted, indifferent and unchurched in city and country. The missionary should not be too old, either, but possess a goodly measure of elasticity and adaptability.

Another matter, especially pertinent in these times of economic stress, is the danger of duplication and overlapping, not always carefully avoided by those responsible for our missionary starategy. One illustration, capable of multiplication, will suffice. In one of our large cities there had been a mission church in existence for approximately 30 years. Adjacent to tis territory a new residential section was developed. Another mission was started, only a few blocks away from the old one. Now these two congregations struggled along for a number of years, working in the same neighborhood and, most naturally, neither of them gaining much ground, until finally they were combined after an inexcusable waste of mission money. The situation was aggravated by the presence of other denominations whose workers had appeared on the field previously to ours and were fairly well established. This leads us to the very important consideration of comity and cooperation with other Christian communions. Not only should we avoid organizing mission fields in territories that can well be served by an already existing church of our own Synod, but we should work together with other denominations in the effort of making America Christian. The over-churching of communities must be averted or corrected. The Cause of Christ is never efficiently promoted by competition but by cooperation. While we have presumably and assertedly learned this lesson in recent years we have so far failed to put it sufficiently

into practice. It is high time that we do so. Our aim should be the Kingdom of God, not selfish denominational aggrandizement.

As far as the Nebraska District is concerned, interdenominational comity and cooperation will have made considerable progress when the proposed Nebraska Council of Churches and Christian Education is consummated by affirmative votes of the church bodies involved. In several counties it has already been operative for about a year with the result that an entirely novel type of home mission work has been evolved which we heartily recommend for application in similar situations.

A brief review of what was and is being done in one of the counties will give a clear impression of the possibilities which are opened by this new phase of missionary endeavor. We take Saline County for an illustration. In the spring of 1932 Dr. J. Robert Hargreaves, Field Secretary of the Home Missions Council, an interdenominational agency with which our own Home Mission Board, theoretically at least, already cooperates, was called in and, in collaboration with the resident ministers made a thorough study of the religious conditions in the county. This survey revealed appalling facts. In the year 1900 there were in the county 40 ministers and 63 churches and Sunday schools. Today there are 17 Protestant ministers and 27 churches left, many very small and some about ready to die. The number of churches includes 2 Catholic parishes. While the population has somewhat increased the average Sunday school attendance has decreased by two-thirds, and the total church membership (including Catholics) has fallen down to the amazingly low level of 20% of the population, while 80% are in no connection whatsoever with the Church of Jesus Christ. Similarly startling conditions, though perhaps not in such an appallingly large measure, will be found elsewhere if a thorough check-up is made. The churches in Saline County are situated along the north and south borders, leaving a large territory between them utterly devoid of any religious influence. Under the present conditions a direct effort looking to the immediate establishment of more churches or Sunday schools would promise no success; but the indirect approach furnishes possibilities. For this reason Dr. Hargreaves advised the formation of a County Council composed of all county ministers, representatives of the congregations and Sunday schools, the County Superintendent of Schools, the school superintendents of the larger towns, farm leaders, delegates from character-building organizations, the denominational executives and officials from the state departments of agriculture and education. This County Council has been organized and is attempting approaches to Christian influence through the following ever-widening openings (altered from J. R. Hargreaves, "County Studies"):

a) Possibilities through the schools.

In Nebraska the present opportunity through the school is unprecedented because of a law requiring character education for all pupils. This has led to a search for methods and to a plan which expresses some of the latest developments in religious education, namely, that of learning by practice rather than by precept. The plan devised by the Department of Education is termed "Knighthood of Youth" and seems to have great possibilities as a method of character-building. It very decidedly favors self-discipline and the mutual appraisal of conduct. Each minister should become familiar with the plan and its objectives, give personal help to the teachers belonging to his parish, and be ready for further active participation when definite plans of cooperation are worked out. The spirit of the state department and the attitude of the local authorities encourage us to feel that in this method we have an approach which may further the spiritual and moral interests of young people who are not approached or reached by any conventional church program.

b) Possibilities through the farm organizations.

There is particularly the 4-H Club. In its conception this organization was really based on the Old Testament regard for the sacredness of the struggle for existence through the land. It was intended to develop the asthetic, humane and spiritual traits of character as well as to increase the ability for economic attainment. In some instances the economic feature is altogether overbalancing the other interests, but that is not the fault of the first idea, nor is it the desire of most of the club leaders. The activities of the 4-H Club are the very natural sequence to those of the Knighthood of Youth. Through it we can take the lines which have been expressed through the imagery of the castle and apply them to the farm industry. If the heart, head, hand and health receive an equal share of consideration it is easily understood that this organization may be used for producing real character, and through it we may attain those moral and spiritual developments which are the Sunday school and church ideals, and this in groups where Church and Sunday School do not yet reach.

To this end a religious inspiration is necessary, and the Church should find a way to convey this impression. May we apply our minds to the discovery of a way to develop the cooperation in harmony with the genius of this enterprise. This indirect approach—through the schools, the 4-H Clubs, and also through the Hi-Y Clubs, Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, Parent-Teachers' organizations etc.—might lead to that ultimate which is the goal of all Christian leaders and missionaries: the winning of souls to Christ and the

building of Christ-like personalities. The Christian religion really functions only as it becomes an integral part of our every-day activities.

This reminds us of a complaint made recently by one of our successful home missionaries. He deplored the fact that the Board is laying too much stress on statistics, on rapid numerical growth and the achievement of financial independence in record time, and that the work is judged by accomplishments along these lines rather than by the transformation of lives and souls saved. The questionnaire with its list of external items to be answered by the missionary is devised to make him hustle and gain church members at almost any cost without proper regard to their spiritual qualifications, if he wants to retain his job. We agree with this brother to a certain extent. Statistics are indeed valuable, but they ought not to be made the cause of reducing earnest efforts for genuine individual conversions which require infinitely more time, patience, prayer and personal work than the winning of merely nominal church members. One regenerated real follower of Christ is worth many times more to the Kingdom of God than 99 others who are Christian in name only. If there has been an over-emphasis on statistics, an immediate change should be made by according larger appreciation and consideration to the spiritual side of the missionary work which is, after all, the most important, as it constitutes the source of all other truly worthwhile, desirable and abiding benefits to the individual as well as to human society.

We have devoted such a comparatively large space to the discussion of our home mission policy because we feel that heretofore it has not received as much interest and consideration as the foreign mission cause. There would still be a good deal more to say; but we must close this chapter now and turn our attention to the foreign field.

(To be concluded)

CONFIRMATION INSTRUCTION*

By H. Kamphausen

On December 19th, last year, I received from the Board of Religious Education two studies on *Confirmation Instruction.* Attached to them were sets of questions to be answered by the recipients of the studies. I felt that I wanted to make a brief contribution to this matter, without confining myself too closely to the questions contained in the studies.

I concur with the Board in the opinion that *we have in the* institution of *Confirmation* and the *period of instruction* leading up to it, *values* that ought to be *conserved* by all means. The intensive study given to this question by the Board shows that the Board is straining every effort to make confirmation instruction more effective and confirmation more meaningful.

For the impression seems to be almost universal that at the present time what we accomplish by the instruction of our confirmands is far from satisfactory. There are many *reasons for our meager success* with our confirmation classes. In the first place. we don't get all the boys and girls of confirmation age we ought to get. Other churches get along without such an instruction period and so parents are apt to think it unnecessary to load upon their children this additional burden. Then there is the matter of discipline in the classes when established. We know of cases in big cities especially, with large enrollment, where the janitor or some board member has to be present to help the minister keep the classs in order. The time the preacher has at his disposal is but limited at best and so it can be imagined how little he can accomplish if he is hardly able to keep the boys from turning the confirmation class into a "rough-house."

Finally, and this is a very important consideration—the main text-book used in instruction, the *catechism, seems to be one of the main stumbling blocks* in many a minister's pathway. The catechism was made in the 16th century, or, at least, molded after the catechisms of that time—and we live in the twentieth. The catechism offers the dogmatics of our Christian faith, and the trend of our times is towards ethics; we emphasize life, not creeds. The catechism is a handbook of theology in more or less popular form. It is entirely *creed-centered.* Today, one of the chief principles of pedagogy is to make all teaching *child-centered,* to adapt it to the capacity and needs of the child, in such measure and such language that it is never out of touch with the child world.

*** This is an article we originally prepared for the Board of Religious Education. In view of the fact that most pastors start their instruction classes at the present time, we publish it in this issue.**

When we make such a criticism of the book that is the very basis of confirmation instruction, it seems to follow that we ought to go one step further and advise its abandonment. There are not a few ministers today who have taken this course. As a result we see from the answers to the questionnaires in the Board's studies that many of our ministers resort to a *bewildering multitude of substitutes for the catechism.* We also notice that they do not speak "with any great assurance or enthusiasm" of these substitutes. The authors of such text-books belong to other denominations, not having our customs, our background, our viewpoints. So in adapting their products to our sphere the ministers—and at times the children, surely their parents—feel doubtful as to the success of their innovation.

Moreover, if it is left to everyone's good pleasure whether he wants to use his church' catechism or not, pretty soon liberty would be turned into license; synodical consciousness and loyalty could not be generated or maintained, and our church would lose its young people even sooner than it does now. If members of the church have nothing in common that distinguishes them from others and is their individual characteristic, how can we expect them to rally around our standard? We know very well that many consider denominationalism the "disgrace of Protestantism" and that our young ministers are very apt to say yea and amen to this. But we hold that our own church ought to have first place in our efforts and that if we *"don't love the church that we see how can we love the church we do not see?"* (to adapt John's argument to the case in question). It is very significant that the churches which indoctrinate their members strictly in their own teachings and by means of their own textbooks are stronger and grow more than those which let their pastors experiment with everything they please (see the success of the Lutheran churches).

So we *don't advise to throw away the catechism* and let everyone make his own. If ours was a catechism-making age it would be its duty to revise and perhaps thoroughly reconstruct its catechism. In the Reformation era Luther's creative mind gave the Lutheran world a catechism that became a classic and has retained the love and admiration of the church to this day. The "Reformed" (in the more specific sense) churches did not adopt Luther's handbook but they produced a great many catechisms of which the Heidelberg Catechism was the victorious survivor. But the Protestant churches today, although they feel the shortcomings of their catechism from a pedagogical standpoint, show no desire or capacity to construct a modern one.

Therefore, the only thing left us is to cling to the catechism we have and *teach and interpret it in harmony with present needs*

and experience. The Board of Religious Education in trying to find a clue to a better way of confirmation instruction, very properly asks the question: *"What do we want to accomplish* with our instruction?" For, naturally, if we know the goal we desire to reach, it will help us to determine whether we are taking the most likely road towards it. In answering this question, the Board finds that the questionnaires vary greatly as to what Instruction and Confirmation are supposed to do. There are four different vitws: 1) We want to give our pupils a knowledge of what it means to be a Christian; this is called the knowledge-centered view. 2) Our aim is to develop Christlike (Christian) character and personality: *life-centered.* 3) We endeavor to prepare our candidates for an intelligent confession of faith in Jesus Christ: *decision-centered.* 4) Our aim is to lead them into active, intelligent participation in the work of the church: *church-centered* view.

At the first blush, this seems to bring a great deal of confusion and uncertainty into our problem. But on closer study we find that the diversity of opinion is not so bad after all. For as we examine the answers of these four "schools of thought" we discover that the "knowledge-centered" ones also desire a change of life in their pupils like the "life-centered" teachers; that they want them to make intelligent "decisions," and that they want them to become active "members of the church." In other words, all four agree as to the esentials of our instruction efforts; the only difference is a difference of emphasis. No one is satisfied with knowledge only, or decision only. But one puts one element in the foreground, and one, another. If we were to give a definition ourselves of our confirmation objective, we should probably say, we want to teach our pupils the meaning of the Christian life. Or, to be more specific, we want to *help them to accept Jesus as their Savior and follow him as their guide.* The confirmation aim, so worded, would require knowledge, but more than knowledge. It would include the religious element, faith in Christ, but also the change of life resulting from such change. It would embrace the creedal element and the ethical, the relation to God and to man, to the church and to the world in its organized life.

When now we come ot take the catechism in hand as we begin our course of instruction, it follows from what we said above about its shortcomings and its need of adjusting, that we *cannot simply begin on the first page* and go through the book mechanically. The minister *needs a note-book* in which he charts the whole course of the instruction period, and also prepares himself for each lesson. If he adopts our definition of the confirmation objective, he ought to ask himself from time to time "am I trying to help the children to get into personal relation with Jesus Christ?" In reading

modern helps on religious education we notice how they stress the point that our teaching must be so vivid and helpful to the child as to enable him to have a religious *experience.* We think this is often over-emphasized; the ideal is too high and onesided. Still it stands to reason if we are to help the children to get a living faith, only a spiritually very much alive pastor can ever dream of being successful at it.

It is unfortunate that our catechism begins with the *Ten Commandments.* We hold that they ought to be treated under the first article. If we incorporate them there we can treat the whole content—or nearly all of it—of the catechism under the general subject of the *three articles of the Christian faith.* That tends not only to unify our teaching material, but also places the Ten Commandments in particular, where they naturally belong. They are part of the Old Testament revelation of which we speak in the first article. This article deals with the creation,, with providence, with sin and with the whole biblical story contained in the Old Testament. A vast and important material! It affords us a chance to introduce the scholars to the beautiful stories of the Old Testament dispensation. He certainly would commit a sin of omission who did not make the *"Bible Stories"* just as important, or more so, than the catechism. In our opinion every lesson ought to bring one or more of these stories to the children's attention.

Of all this great store of biblical lore, the catechism makes mention only of the Ten Commandments. These commandments are the foundation on which the religious and moral life of the race rests, and, in particular, they point out the essentials of Israel's religious and social life. It cannot be our place here to enter upon a detailed study of how the Ten Commandments ought to be taught. Suffice it to say that in discussing the commandments of "the second table" we can't get along without the deepening of their moral content which we owe to Jesus (see Sermon on the Mount). Without that they would contain nothing but what we find in the moral codes of other religions. So we shall here have already an evidence of Jesus being our guide in the ethical relations of life.

But the Old Testament offers more, by far, than only the Ten Commandments. What a great and rewarding task to open to the children a *knowledge of the history, the great characters* (judges, kings, prophets), the *religious literature* (psalms), the *typical institutions* of the chosen people! Naturally, we would not perform the whole of that task here under the first article. It should have our attention though at some time or other, and since the time at our disposal is so limited we should carefully select the stories and subjects we want to study. Under this article we also have a chance to give the pupils a tenable conception of *divine providence* (the

story of Joseph is an illustration); of the *causes* of the coming in of *evil* and *sin;* why God chose Israel and left the other people to themselves (comparatively), and many other things.

Then we approach the second article, the *heart of the Christian faith,* the *coming of Jesus.* Here let us remember our definition of the confirmation objective: "We want to help the children to accept Jesus as their Savior and follow him as our guide." We must teach the catechsim and, for the present, the second article in such a way as to be in keeping with our definition. (If others have other definitions, that definition will have to be their guiding star). "Accepting Jesus as one's Savior" suggests that the Lord put himself in relation to human beings. From the very first he *surrounded himself with disciples.* These disciples had already religious faith but Jesus clarified and deepened that faith. Their faith in him as a friend, a helper, a prophet, a Messiah, "the Son of God" grew. Today, we tell the children, there are people who have faith in God. *You* have such faith: in fellowship with Jesus it grows, becomes a light and a power. So have heathen people religious faith, but Jesus gives it fuller light and saving strength.

Then we call their attention to the fact that he came for *sinners,* to bring them to repentance, to assure them of divine forgiveness. Also that in times of distress, sickness, death, Jesus is very near and man is more than ordinarily ready to receive him. There are beautiful stories in the life of Jesus to exemplify, and we draw on them copiously. Finally, Jesus is surrendered to the Gentiles, betrayed, denied, shamefully and cruelly treated, crucified. The disciples thought they had lost him. But on seeing him risen they come to see that he died as a sacrifice to reveal God's surpassing love (John 3: 16) to man, to show the wickedness of sin and Christ's own victorious power of obedience and faith. His resurrection by the Father is the indication that he is the God-appointed bringer of salvation and the guarantee of his believers' own redemption.

His disciples' faith overcame all temporary eclipse, it became a power whereby they were enabled to live and die for him and so to be witnesses for Christ. To do this effectively they received the *Holy Ghost,* the divine equipment for awakening faith in others. They carried the gospel to all nations to make them "disciples" (Matt. 28), to kindle in them the faith in Jesus as their Savior.

So the *Christian Church* was founded. It is composed of believers in various stages of faith. *How* does a person *come to have faith?* Generally, by the preaching (or reading) of the word of God, under the influence of the operation of the Holy Spirit. He will repent, feel sorry for his sins and seek divine forgiveness: he will *accept Jesus as his Savior.* We call it conversion. (It is not necessary to discuss, technically, the six stages of "the order of

salvation.") The Lord has *many ways* to bring a man to faith: times of trial, sickness, privations are especially blessed to him in this respect.

If the Word is the pre-eminent instrument on God's side, *prayer* is man's ladder to climb out of darkness to light. It is man's answer to God's calling, it has been called the breath of the soul. There we leave it to the individual pastor to make the chapter on Prayer (in the catechism) fruitful for his class.

The believer has in Christ not only a part in the divinely wrought salvation, Jesus is to him also the *guide in his personal and social life.* The boy Jesus was subject to his parents; he loved to be in his Father's house; he grew naturally in the spiritual, moral and intellectual sphere. When a man, he was a teacher of the good life (the Sermon on the Mount). He revealed the father's perfect love and holiness and led the faith of his disciples to ever greater heights. He showed how to be a faithful member of the church. He loved his nation (weeps over Jerusalem), but also the Samaritan, the Roman, the barbarian. He was the friend of the common people, but he also sought to awaken the rich to the godly life. He never condemned warlike nations in so many words. Still, he never used violent ways himself, he was a prince of peace. The picture of the church triumphant is composed of all nations, tongues and tribes. All the kingdoms of the world will be subject to God and his Christ in the end.

So he has become the *light of the world,* a never ceasing fount of personal and social growth, towards a perfection never to be reached in this world. But as this life reaches its consummation in the father's house, so the end-discourses of the Lord let us hope for a new world in which sin and death have been abolished and the principles of love and righteousness become victorious.

The material in our hands is rich beyond measure. The teacher will show his mastery in the way he orders and selects it. The method will be not that of popular preaching, but largely that of question and answer so as to get the active cooperation of the pupil.

The chapters on the *Sacraments* have not been touched yet. They will best be reserved for the end of the period. To explain and make impressive to the children the meaning of *baptism* as the guarantee that little children belong in the Kingdom and church of Christ, and that the Lord's Supper is the Holy of Holies of the Christian community, will require the minister's deepest thought and most genuine spirituality.

The Board's studies, among other things, present the question: "Should *memory work* be encouraged?" We should say, a goodly

number of Bible verses and, if possible, some standard hymns should be memorized. The catechism's own explanation should not be memorized at all. If you have them do the latter anyway, you make of the catechetical hour a mechanical and tiresome affair and a parrot of the child.

The other question: "Should the work of the minister in the instruction period be related to the Sunday school?" is a natural question and one reaching after an ideal situation. We have so far never seen it done and doubt whether, under existing circumstances, it can be accomplished at all.

Anyone who has had a sufficient experience in instructing and confirming knows that our effort are often lamentably unsuccessful. Nevertheless, there are some of us who received in their instruction period the impetus toward the higher life and so we continue with our efforts, believing that even if some of the seed falls on the wayside or on stony ground, some may fall on the good land and bring fruit thirty, sixty and a hundred fold. We cannot, however, expect such a result unless we equip ourselves for our teaching task with all thoroughness and care.

Die Betätigung des christlichen Charakters in der staatlichen Gemeinschaft.

Von Prof. Dr. Grützmacher.

I.

Recht. Strafe, Eid.

Zu der Familie, der Kultur- und Wirtschaftsgemeinschaft tritt als letzte Sozialform, in welcher sich auch der christliche Charakter zu betätigen hat, der **Staat.** Wie man ihn auch immer genauer definieren möge, so ist **einer seiner konstituierenden Begriffe das Recht.** Von diesem wird zunächst zu handeln und aus seiner Problematik an Einzelfragen Strafe und Eid christlich zu beleuchten sein.— **Das Wesen des Rechtes ist vor allem durch seine Unterscheidung wie Verbindung mit der Sittlichkeit zu erfassen.** Beide wenden sich an den Willen des Menschen und wollen diesen zu einer normgemäßen Betätigung veranlassen. Allein die Sittlichkeit legt das entscheidende Gewicht auf die inneren Motive oder auf die Gesinnung, aus der erst das entsprechende äußere Handeln erwachsen soll. Das Recht dagegen kümmert sich in erster Linie, streng genommen überhaupt nur, um die äußere Tat, und es ist ihm gleichgültig, ob diese aus Furcht oder Liebe erwachsen ist. Infolgedessen kann das Recht das ihm gemäße Verhalten erzwingen, beziehungsweise mit äußerer Strafe darauf reagieren, während echte sittliche Gesinnung nur aus innerer Freiheit erwachsen und sich selbst im Gewissen beurteilen kann. Unterscheiden sich so unter persönlich subjektivem Gesichtswinkel Sittlichkeit und Recht, können sie hinsichtlich ihres objektiven Gehaltes zu einem guten Teil zusammenfallen. Die zweite Hälfte der zehn Gebote trägt nicht sittlichen, sondern auch rechtlichen Charakter. Dieser Zusammenfall erklärt sich daraus, daß das Recht seinen Gehalt aus der vorhandenen Sitte nimmt. **Recht ist derjenige Bestandteil der Sitte, der erzwingbaren Charakter gewonnen hat.** Bald ein größerer, bald ein kleinerer Teil der Sittenvorschriften werden Bestandteile des Rechtsgesetzes. Dementsprechend hat auch die christliche Sittlichkeit Recht und Strafe bis zur Gegenwart inhaltlich beeinflußt, teils verschärft wie etwa im Eherecht, teils gemildert in der Form der Strafen. Immer wieder begegnet man in der Religions- und Kirchengeschichte der Neigung, möglichst den ganzen Gehalt der offenbarten Sittlichkeit in erzwingbares Recht zu verwandeln. So haben der Katholizismus, aber auch das Sektentum starke Neigung bezeugt, alle ethischen Anforderungen in „Kirchenrecht" oder gar in Weltrecht zu verwandeln. Ein Tolstoi wollte die Forderungen der Bergpredigt Jesu zu staatlichen und völkerrechtlichen Statuten erheben. **Dem gegenüber lehrt der Protestantismus zwischen Gottes Geboten und staatlichen Gesetzen scharf**

zu scheiden. Die ersteren verlieren ihren inneren Wert, wenn sie erzwingbares Recht werden, und legen den natürlichen Menschen ein Joch auf, das sie nicht tragen können, und wenn sie es doch versuchen, sie zu Heuchlern machen. Vom ethischen Gesichtspunkt ist nicht das schroffste Recht das wertvollste, sondern — einer Erklärung Jesu gemäß — muß dieses um der natürlichen Herzenshärtigkeit willen z. B. in der Ehescheidung gewisse Konzessionen machen. **Der sittliche Mensch und darum auch der christliche Charakter wird das jeweils geltende Recht mit in sein Ethos aufnehmen.** Er wird alle Forderungen und Gesetze nicht nur äußerlich, sondern auch innerlich, nicht nur aus Zwang und Furcht vor Strafe, sondern um der Liebe zur Gerechtigkeit willen zu erfüllen suchen.

Der Charakter des Rechtes wird noch deutlicher, wenn man den von ihm unlösbaren Begriff der **Strafe** hinzunimmt. Ueber das Wesen der Strafe sind in neuerer Zeit in Ethik wie Rechtsphilosophie die lebhaftesten Debatten geführt worden. Sie haben zur Bildung zweier Hauptfronten geführt. Die einen sind Vertreter der absoluten, die andern der relativen Straftheorie oder anders ausgedrückt: die einen betrachten die Strafe nur rückwärts unter dem Gesichtspunkt der Tat, die andern wesentlich nach vorwärts hinsichtlich ihrer Wirkung auf den Täter. Ein hervorragender Jurist — Löning — erläutert die beiden Positionen: „Die absoluten Straftheorien unternehmen es, zunächst in Anschluß an das natürliche Rechtsgefühl, die Strafe aus dem Verbrechen selbst, dessen rechtliche Folge sie ist, zu begründen und zu rechtfertigen; sie sehen die Strafe als die schlechthin absolut notwendige Folge des Verbrechens an. Die relativen Straftheorien fassen die Strafen als Mittel auf zu einem in der Zukunft liegenden, von dem verübten Verbrechen selbst unabhängigen, im übrigen aber guten und nützlichen Zweck." Strafe ist auch bei dem ersteren Standpunkt keineswegs Rache; das ist ein Privatgefühl, das den einzelnen Kläger für erlittene Unbill beseelen kann. **Die Strafe dagegen ist die Erscheinung eines menschlich gefühllosen, überpersönlichen Gesamtwillens. Die Majestät der gestörten Rechtsordnung wendet sich gegen denjenigen, der sie gebrochen hat.** Das ist eine durchaus sittliche Haltung, welche der Jurist Stahl einmal in die Formel kleidete: „Die vergeltende Gerechtigkeit ist ihrem Gedanken nach die Herstellung der Herrlichkeit der sittlichen Macht durch die Vernichtung oder das Leiden dessen, der sich wider sie empört hat." Bei dieser Strafauffassung wird ein möglichstes Gleichmaß zwischen Verbrechen und Strafe erstrebt und auf die persönlichen Motive des Verbrechers für das Strafmaß kaum Gewicht gelegt. Die andre — in Deutschland besonders durch den verstorbenen Juristen Liszt in Berlin vertretene — Richtung denkt bei der Strafe ganz an die Persönlichkeit des Verbrechers und an sein Verhältnis zur Gesellschaft. „Die Aufgabe der Strafe

kann dahin gehen, den Verbrecher wieder zu einem brauchbaren Glied der Gesellschaft zu machen. Es kann sich dabei in erster Linie um die Kräftigung der erschütterten Hemmungsvorstellungen oder um eine umgestaltende Einwirkung auf den Charakter des Täters handeln. Dementsprechend kann man Abschreckung oder Besserung als die angestrebte Wirkung der Strafe unterscheiden." Sodann aber hat die Strafe das Interesse der Gesellschaft zu wahren: „Die Aufgabe der Strafe kann dahin gehen, dem für die Gesellschaft unbrauchbar gewordenen Verbrecher die physische Möglichkeit zur Begehung weiterer Verbrechen auf immer oder auf Zeit zu entziehen." **Jene objektive Vergeltungstheorie der Strafe wird hier durch subjektive Abschreckung und Besserung wie soziale Sicherung ersetzt.**

Vom Standpunkt des Christentums wird man auf eine Verbindung aller dieser Elemente zu dringen haben. Die Strafvergeltung hat zugleich abschreckenden, bessernden und sichernden Charakter zu tragen. Diese Momente werden sich in der Wirklichkeit leichter einigen lassen, wenn man die richterliche Strafverkündigung und den praktischen Strafvollzug enger verbindet, wie das in der Gegenwart schon vielfach der Fall ist. Es kann zur Vergeltung und Abschreckung eine hohe Strafe verhängt werden, aber ihre ganze oder teilweise Durchführung davon abhängig gemacht werden, wie weit sie auf den Verbrecher bessernd wirkt. Je nach der psychologischen und nicht selten auch pathologischen Wesensart des Täters kann die Unschädlichmachung auch durch Internierung in Pflegestätten erfolgen. **Der christliche Charakter wird demnach vom Recht vor allem verlangen, daß es dem Menschen auch mit zur Wiedergewinnung seiner Seele verhelfe und darum gerade die Bestrebungen unterstützen, welche die Strafe erziehlich wirken lassen.** Denn für den christlichen Charakter ist das Recht und selbst die Gerechtigkeit nicht die oberste Norm, sondern Liebe, welche Vergebung und Wiedergeburt bezweckt. Blickt man in das neue Testament hinein, so erscheint das Recht besonders in der paulinischen Verkündung als eine Gottesordnung für die natürliche Welt. Römer 13, 1 wird die Obrigkeit gerade als Vertreterin der Strafgerechtigkeit Gottes Dienerin genannt, die das Schwert nicht umsonst trägt.

1. Petri 2, 14 verlangt Gehorsam gegen die Obrigkeit, wenn sie die Funktion der Bestrafung des Bösen und der Belobigung des Guten vollzieht. Genau die gleiche Stellung nehmen die reformatorischen Bekenntnisse ein. Aber diese Anerkennung von Recht und Strafe ist doch nur eine bedingte. Beide sind Gottesordnungen nur für die durch die Sünde gestörte Welt zu dem Zweck, jene einzudämmen und zu verhüten, daß der Kosmos ganz aus den Fugen geht. Daraus ergibt sich die Konsequenz, daß **der Christ und die Christenheit, soweit sie der Sünde enthoben sind, mit Recht und Strafe nicht das Geringste mehr zu tun haben.** Diese Stellung

nimmt Jesus selbst in der Bergpredigt mit voller Klarheit ein, wenn er von seinen Jüngern verlangt, auf jede Geltendmachung des Rechtes, auf alles Prozessieren zu verzichten, um statt dessen dem Gegner zu vergeben, ja sogar weiteres Unrecht von ihm zu erdulden. Ganz im Sinn Jesu macht Paulus 1. Kor. 6, 1—11 der Gemeinde Vorwürfe, daß sie Rechtshändel verfolgt, noch dazu vor heidnischen Gerichten, während dafür als Richter — wie Paulus ironisch hinzufügt — die Geringsten und Verachtetsten gut genug wären. Reich Gottes und vollkommene christliche Charaktere haben mit Recht und Strafe nichts zu tun. **Nur sofern Christ und Christenheit wieder sündig werden** — und das ist in der Empirie der Welt stets von neuem der Fall — **unterfallen auch sie dem Recht.** Wird der Christ Subjekt einer Rechtsverletzung, so ist auch er verpflichtet, sich dem Gesetz und seinen Folgen zu beugen. Der Versuch der mittelalterlichen Kirche, ihre Priester, wenn sie gesündigt haben, dem weltlichen Gericht zu entziehen, liegt nicht in der urchristlichen Linie. Ist der Christ Objekt einer Rechtsverletzung, so soll er seinerseits zunächst versuchen, auf religiös-sittlichem Weg mit dem Gegner fertig zu werden, durch persönliche Aussprache, durch Heranziehung eines kleinen Kreises christlicher Brüder, dann erst der ganzen Gemeinde zu öffentlicher Urteilsfällung, die aber nur religiös-sittliche Zuchtmittel, keine rechtlichen Strafen anwenden soll. Die paradoxe Forderung Jesu sich weiteres Unrecht gefallen zu lassen, zum Schlag auf die rechte Backe auch den auf die linke, hat nicht den Sinn, einen Verbrecher zu weiteren Untaten durch schwachmütiges Dulden zu ermutigen. **Diese Handlungsweise soll vielmehr die stärkste ethische Gegenwehr darstellen** und dadurch dem Unrechttuenden seine Sünde zum Bewußtsein bringen und ihn zu ihrer Aufgabe veranlassen. Gelingt das nicht, so wird auch der christliche Charakter — unter Verzicht auf Privatrache — einen Verbrecher dem weltlichen Gericht zur Bestrafung übergeben dürfen.

Eine wichtige Einzelfrage aus der Verhältnisbestimmung von Christentum und Recht stellt die Haltung zur **Todesstrafe** dar. **Aus der Bibel wird sich keine eindeutige Entscheidung gewinnen lassen.** Denn 1. Mose 9, 5: „Wer Menschblut vergießt, des Blut soll auch durch Menschen vergossen werden" ist eine alttestamentliche Weissagung, die ebensowenig wie der Grundsatz: Auge um Auge, Zahn um Zahn! auf der neutestamentlichen Offenbarungsstufe ohne weiteres gilt. Das Wort Jesu an Petrus, Matth. 26, 52: Alle die das Schwert nehmen, werden auch durch das Schwert umkommen, handelt nicht von einer durch das Recht zu verhängenden Todesstrafe, sondern konstatiert nur ein in der Welt zu beobachtendes sittliches Gesetz, daß der Mensch das zu erleiden pflegt, was er andern zufügt. Paulus spricht zwar Römer 13 davon, daß die Obrigkeit das Schwert nicht umsonst trägt, aber es ist nicht gesagt, daß er

damit das Schwert des Scharfrichters zur Tötung von Menschen meint, sondern er kann damit auch nur das Symbol einer schneidenden Gerechtigkeit bezeichnen. Auf jeden Fall spricht Paulus von einer heidnischen Obrigkeit, nicht aber von einer durch die Grundsätze des Christentums bestimmten. Infolgedessen sind in der Frage der Todesstrafe, die bis zur Gegenwart die Gemüter erregt, die allgemeinen Prinzipien in Anwendung zu bringen. Schon die Ueberlegung, daß alle irdischen Urteile fehlbar sind, kann bedenklich machen gegen den Vollzug einer irreparablen Strafe. Die Behauptung, die Todesstrafe sei zur Abschreckung notwendig und stelle die stärkste Sicherung der Gesellschaft dar, läßt sich durch moralstatistische Erhebungen mindestens nicht beweisen. Es ist durchaus nicht festgestellt, daß Länder ohne Todesstrafe mehr Verbrecher haben, als solche mit ihr. Gerade bei den schwersten Vergehen pflegt der Affekt ein so starker zu sein, daß er auch durch Hemmungen, wie die Aussicht auf Todesstrafe, nicht beseitigt wird. Aus der früheren Bestimmung von Wesen und Zweck der Strafe wird sich die Entscheidung ergeben. Hat jene zwar auch vergeltenden, abschreckenden, sichernden Charakter, soll sie aber in erster Linie erziehen und bessern, so ist diese letztere Möglichkeit bei der Todesstrafe ausgeschlossen, dagegen bei jeder andern Strafform durchführbar. **Infolgedessen wird sich der christliche Charakter für die Abschaffung der Todesstrafe einsetzen.**

Ganz entschieden wird vom Standpunkt des Christentums eine merkwürdige Sitte zu verwerfen sein, die in der Vorkriegszeit in Deutschland wie einigen andern Ländern noch sehr verbreitet war, jetzt aber allem Anschein nach immer mehr im Rückgang begriffen ist, das **Duell.** Wahrscheinlich im Mittelalter in Südfrankreich entsprungen, knüpft es an die Gottesurteile an, die im Ausgang eines menschlichen Kampfes das klare Urteil Gottes sahen. In späterer Zeit glaubte man in der Herausforderung eines Gegners bei Ehrbeleidigungen schon das Zeichen von Mannesmut und damit eines reinigenden Ethos sehen zu dürfen. Allein physischer Mut und Sittlichkeit dürfen nicht identifiziert werden. Wer die Roheit aufbringt, in eine fremde Ehe einzubrechen, verfügt leicht auch über die Robustheit, mit der Pistole für sie einzustehen. Der Ausgang so manchen Duelles bezeugt, daß der Unschuldige ums Leben kam und der Schuldige weiter — und wohl gar noch bewundert — lebte. **Für den Christen kann die Verwerflichkeit des Duells als eine eigenmächtige Uebernahme der allein dem öffentlichen Recht zukommenden Bestrafung garnicht fraglich sein.** In gewissem Sinn verständlich wird das lange Beharren dieses barbarischen Brauches und zwar gerade in höherstehendem, vielfach auch der Kirche zugeneigten Kreisen, nur aus der Tatsache zu erklären sein, daß es Ehrverletzungen gibt, die trotz ihrer Bösartigkeit zu fein sind, um

von den öffentlichen Gerichten entsprechend gefaßt und geahndet werden zu können. Das führt zu der Forderung besondrer, für diese Fragen zuständiger Gerichts- und Versöhnungs-Tribunale.

Bei der Rechtsfindung spielt eine besondre Rolle der **Eid.** In seiner bisher weitaus verbreitetsten Form ist er **eine religiöse Handlung d. h. eine Bekräftigung der Wahrheit unter Anrufung Gottes als Zeugen und Richters — der sogenannte versichernde, assertorische Eid.** Aber auch außerhalb des Gerichtes kommt im Staatsleben der Eid zur Verwendung. Bei Antritt eines Amtes als Monarch oder Präsident oder bei andern bedeutsamen Stellungen wird von der betreffenden Persönlichkeit verlangt, daß sie schwört, den geltenden Normen entsprechend ihre Tätigkeit getreu und mit Einsatz aller Kraft auszuführen. **Auch hier wird Gott angerufen und zwar als Herr der Zukunft, der helfen wird. Dieser Eid trägt versprechenden, promissorischen Charakter.** Das Eigentümliche und Problematische am Eid ist die Tatsache, daß hier eine religiöse Handlung vom Recht erzwungen wird. Die Richter bestimmen die zu Vereidigenden und überlassen es dem Einzelnen nicht, ob er schwören will oder nicht. Die amtliche Uebertragung findet nicht früher statt, als bis der Eid feierlich geleistet ist. Sieht man diesen Tatbestand unter großen Gesichtspunkten an, so kommt ihm eine nicht geringe weltanschauliche Bedeutung zu. **Die Forderung des Eides bedeutet nicht weniger als eine Bankrott-Erklärung des Rechtes, mit seinen eigenen Mitteln die Wahrheit zu finden, und des Staates aus menschlicher Kraft seine Aemter treu und zuverlässig führen zu lassen.** Die immanenten Größen des Rechtes und Staates müssen eine Anleihe machen bei der transzendenten der Religion. Noch schärfer formuliert, wird mit der Einrichtung des Eides angezeigt, daß ohne ihn normaler Weise die Menschen lügen oder ihre Aemter unzuverlässig führen. Der Eid ist eine Bestätigung der Sündhaftigkeit der Menschen und der Notwendigkeit, religiöse Kräfte herbeizurufen zur Sicherung des menschlichen Gemeinschaftslebens. Versteht man den Eid unter diesem Gesichtswinkel, dann scheint er eine begrüßenswerte Anerkennung der Religion zu sein. Und doch hat Jesus in seiner Bergrede seinen Jüngern alles Schwören verboten und sein Bruder Jakobus dieses absolute Eidesverbot in seinem Brief wiederholt. Der Grund für diese Haltung wird gerade aus unsrer bisherigen Feststellung, daß der Eid die Sünde voraussetze, klar. **Jesu Jünger sollen aus der Wahrheit sein, jedes Ja soll bei ihnen ein wirkliches Ja, jedes Nein ein echtes Nein sein. Sie bedürfen keiner feierlichen Formeln,** um einmal — ausnahmsweise — ihren Versicherungen absoluten Wahrheitscharakter zu geben. Jünger Jesu stehen stets vor dem Angesicht Gottes, auch ohne daß sie es besonders aussprechen. Sie übernehmen jede Pflicht und alle Aemter in der Verantwortung vor Gott, wie im Ver-

trauen auf seine Hilfe in der Zukunft. **Darum kommt in der Tat für den christlichen Charakter der Eid nicht in Betracht; er ist eine Ordnung des Weltreiches, nicht des Reiches Gottes.** Nun lebt aber auch der christliche Charakter noch in der Welt und wird in irdische Komplikationen verwickelt. Kommt er vor ein weltliches Gericht als Zeuge, so kann er nicht erwarten, daß man dort an den Ernst seines christlichen Wortes unbedingt glaubt, so gewiß auch manche Christen hier mit ihrer Eidesverweigerung Eindruck gemacht haben. **Der Christ kann sich aber auch zum Schutz der eigenen Schwachheit und zur Beruhigung der Rechtspflege zu einem Eid herablassen.** So hat es Jesus selbst getan, als er Matth. 26, 63 die ihm vom Hohenpriester vorgelegte Eidesformel mit der ihr entsprechenden Antwort bekräftigte, um diesem Mann damit anzudeuten: „Weil du gewohnt bist ohne Eid mit der Lüge zu rechnen, will ich dir mit deiner Eidesformel die Wahrheit bekräftigen. Auch Paulus hat mehrfach Schwurformeln verwandt, um seinen weltlichen Gegnern seinen Wahrheitsernst eindringlich zu machen (2. Kor. 1, 23; 11, 31). Dementsprechend hat auch die Reformation den Eid als Konzession an die Welt Christen gestattet.

Kann sich somit der Christ zu einem Eid herablassen, so darf er es aber nicht billigen, wenn unchristliche oder unreligiöse Menschen zu einer religiösen Formel gezwungen werden, die sie ohne innerliche Unwahrheit nicht gebrauchen können. **Niemand darf bei Gott schwören, der nicht an Gott glaubt.** Darum bedeutet es gerade vom Standpunkt des Christentums einen sittlichen Fortschritt, wenn z. B. in Deutschland nach der Staatsumgestaltung der Eid auch in profaner Form als einfache Bekräftigung ohne Nennung Gottes zugelassen wird. Weiter wird darauf hinzuarbeiten sein, daß die Zahl der Eidesleistungen erheblich beschränkt wird. Der Eid hat jeden Wert und jede Würde dadurch verloren, daß man ihn bei nebensächlichsten Dingen anwandte und viele Menschen in Gewissenkonflikte brachte oder gar zum Meineid verleitete. Der Appell an Gott muß gerade im Recht selten bleiben, wenn er wirken soll.

Gedanken über und aus Goethes „Faust."

Von Dr. E. Schieler.

Der „Faust" ist Goethes Lebenswerk, ist seine bedeutendste Dichtung, steht einzig in ihrer Art, unübertroffen, da unter den Produkten der Weltliteratur. Die Wurzeln der Dichtung reichen zurück bis in die frühen Kinderjahre des Dichters, da er das Volksbuch von Dr. Faust las und später ein Puppenspiel, das denselben Gegenstand behandelte auf der Frankfurter Messe schaute, und da er im elterlichen Haus zu Frankfurt a. M. mystisch-chemische Studien trieb; unter diesen Einflüssen dämmerte der Gedanke daran in seiner jungen Seele. Um 1772 lag die Konzeption seines „Faust," wie er selber erzählt, „bei ihm jugendlich, von vornherein klar, die ganze Reihenfolge weniger ausführlich vor." Und erst im höchsten Greisenalter erzwang er mit dem Aufgebot der letzten Kraft den Abschluß. Freilich verteilt sich die Beschäftigung mit der großen Aufgabe nicht gleichmäßig über den weiten Zeitraum von 1772 bis 1831. Aber die Entwicklungen, die zwischen den kürzeren oder längeren Perioden seiner Arbeit am „Faust" liegen, sind mit ihren Ergebnissen für das Denken und Fühlen des Dichters in das Werk eingegangen. Goethe verzweifelte einmal daran, seinen großen Plan je zu vollenden; es war, als im Jahr 1790 wieder ein Stück des Werkes erschien; aber auf Freund Schillers Rat nahm er es wieder auf; doch erst drei Jahre nach des Freundes Tod, 1808, kam der erste Teil vollendet heraus unter dem Titel „Faust, eine Tragödie." Seitdem blieb die Arbeit lange liegen, obgleich der erste Teil auch für Goethe nur ein Fragment war. Endlich, im August 1824 wagte er sich an die Bearbeitung des zweiten Teils, den er sieben Jahre später, im August 1831 vollendete.

Als er den letzten Strich daran getan hatte, siegelte er sein Werk ein und bestimmte, daß es erst nach seinem Tod veröffentlicht werden sollte. So umfaßt dieses größte Werk unsrer Literatur seinem Werden nach das ganze Leben seines Dichtens vom Jüngling bis zum Greisenalter; aber wie sehr sich auch das **Selbsterlebte** darin abspiegelt, **es ist dennoch zugleich das von jedem denkenden, forschenden, ringenden Menschen Erlebte;** insbesondre ist es mit Recht „die Tragödie der neuen Zeit" genannt worden. Wie in Goethes Romanen die Bildung des Jahrhunderts, ihre Licht- und Schattenseiten, ihre Verirrungen und Laster **episch** zur Darstellung kommen, so wird im ersten Teil des „Faust" das titanenhafte Ringen um das ewig Unergründliche, das ohnmächtige Rütteln an der verschlossenen Pforte des Jenseits, die Auflehnung gegen den kindlichen Christenglauben, das Suchen und Nichtfinden **dramatisch** dargestellt, während der zweite Teil eine Lösung der Konflikte anstrebt, freilich auch ohne sie zu erreichen. (König.)

In den verschiedenen und verschiedenartigen Goethefeiern anläßlich der hundertsten Wiederkehr seines Todestages wurde das Leben und die Bedeutung des Dichterfürsten auch für unsre Zeit gebührend verherrlicht, seine verschiedenen Dichtungen, poetische und prosaische, lyrische, epische und dramatische wurden gewürdigt; des „Faust" geschah zuweilen Erwähnung, ohne auf den Inhalt und Wert desselben näher einzugehen. Dies geschah aus naheliegenden Gründen. Wenn hier der Versuch gemacht wird, diese großartige Dichtung zu behandeln, so möge man beachten, daß es nur ein bescheidener Versuch sein soll, einige Gedanken, die von besonderm Interesse zu sein schienen, herauszuheben, um so für die allgemeinere Wertschätzung auch in theologischen Kreisen einen Beitrag zu liefern. Auch der Theologe soll sich Blick und Sinn für die Meisterwerke des Geistes bewahren, um sein Wirken zu befruchten und die Bildung des geistlichen Standes unter den Weltkindern zur Geltung zu bringen. Wir dürfen nicht als Rückständige betrachtet werden, wollen wir das Reich Gottes den Menschen nahe rücken.

Da die Bearbeitung des „Faust" sich über das ganze Leben des Dichters hinzieht, so ist leicht erklärlich und ganz natürlich, daß das Werk das innere Dasein seines Meisters widerspiegelt, von dem ersten Erwachen selbständiger Lebens- und Kunstanschauung bis zum letzten Stadium erhabener Ruhe, auch in diesem höheren Sinn sein Lebenswerk.

Man darf daraus aber nicht den Schluß ziehen, daß der Lebensweg des Helden, des Faust, dem des Dichters parallel laufe, daß der Faust der Dichtung durchaus den Dichter darstelle. Faust ist von Anfang bis zu Ende der Mann der Tat; sein leidenschaftliches Streben und Begehren bleibt ungebrochen. Der greise Goethe aber läßt die Dinge auf sich einwirken, statt sie mit starker Hand meistern zu wollen. Er überblickt die Umwelt als ruhig Betrachtender; er hat Seelenruhe erlangt, die seinem Faust noch als Hundertjährigem versagt ist. Einmal, im zweiten Stadium der Faustdichtung hat Goethe daran gedacht, seinen Helden demselben Ziel zuzuleiten, das er selbst erreicht hatte; der Monolog in Wald und Höhle bezeugt dies. Der Dichter hat die Absicht bald wieder aufgegeben, weil sie die Grundlinie des Charakters gestört hätte. Und zumal als die Dichtung — in ihrer endgültigen Gestalt — zum Abbild des ewigen, sehnenden Ringens der Menschheit wurde, konnte sie nur in überweltlicher Ferne, in den Gefilden der Seligen den Zustand beglückender Ruhe zeigen, der dem irdischen Faust unerreichbar blieb:

„Gerettet ist das edle Glied
Der Geisterwelt vom Bösen;
Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Den können wir erlösen;

Und hat an ihm die Liebe gar
Von oben teil genommen,
Begegnet ihm die selge Schar
Mit herzlichem Willkommen,"

singen die Engel, da sie „Faustens Unsterbliches" zum Himmel entführen. Und Goethe sagte zu Eckermann (6. Juni 1831): „In diesen Versen ist der Schlüssel zu Faustens Rettung enthalten." In Faust selber eine immer höhere und reinere Tätigkeit bis ans Ende, und von oben die ihm zu Hilfe kommende ewige Liebe. „Es steht dies mit unsrer religiösen Vorstellung durchaus in Harmonie, nach welcher wir nicht bloß durch eigne Kraft selig werden, sondern durch die hinzukommende göttliche Gnade," fügt Goethe hinzu. Das ist in wenig Worten die große Idee der Dichtung, die sich nicht bloß im Leben der gesamten Menschheit, sondern in dem des einzelnen Menschen wiederholt: Faust unterliegt Versuchungen, die der Teufel ihm bereitet, aber niemals sagt er „zum Augenblick, verweile doch, du bist so schön" — immer erhebt er sich, strebt nach Reinerem, Höherem, und so muß Mephistopheles endlich eingestehen:

„Mir ist ein großer einzger Schatz entwendet!
Die hohe Seele, die sich mir verpfändet,
Die haben sie mir pfiffig weggehascht."

Aus eigner Kraft aber vermögen wir nicht den Versuchungen uns zu entwinden. „Ohne mich könnt ihr nichts tun," mahnt Jesus und Paulus schreibt aus eigner Erfahrung: „Die Gnade Gottes ist's, die mich stärkt." Der Dichter nennt's: die hinzukommende göttliche Gnade." Sie kommt zu unserm Streben und Tun hinzu; dieses aber muß vorhanden sein. Nur die höher Strebenden, die sich Anstrengenden, die Tätigen „können wir erlösen" — ist ein Lebensmotiv Goethes, meisterhaft ausgeführt im „Faust." „Nirgends anders ist die Vernunftidee des „Faust" zu suchen," erklärt ein Faustkenner, „als in der durch die Handlung bekräftigten Ueberzeugung von der unbesiegbaren Kraft des Guten und von der Erlösung, die schon im Streben selbst dem Menschen zugesichert ist."

Betrachten wir nun den **Gang der Handlung.**

Mit dem Prolog im Himmel beginnt die Handlung. Der Dichter versetzt uns in den Himmel, wie ihn auf Grund biblischer Andeutungen und Aussprüche das christlich gläubige Gemüt sich ausgestaltet hat. Der Herr, auf seinem Thron, ist umgeben von seinen himmlischen Heerscharen, und inmitten der Engel erscheint auch Mephistopheles vor seinem Antlitz, „ein Teil des Teils, der anfangs alles war, ein Teil der Finsternis, die sich das Licht gebar," der nicht allwissend ist, wie er sagt, doch vieles weiß. Er ist einer von den Geistern, die verneinen, die der Herr, der Schaffende,

Bejahende, den Menschen beigegeben hat, um ihre leicht erschlaffende Kraft zu immer regerem Erfüllen ihrer irdischen Aufgabe anzuspornen. Mephisto verspottet die Menschen, weil ihr Mühen und Ringen ihm lächerlich und aussichtslos erscheint. Der Herr sieht in allem Verfehlten doch das Wirken des hohen Triebes, den er in die menschliche Seele gelegt hat, des dunklen Dranges nach Wahrheit, der freilich erst im Jenseits befriedigt werden kann. Und dabei gedenkt er des Faust, der in seinem rastlosen Wahrheitsstreben mit höherem Recht als irgendein andrer der Knecht Gottes heißen darf. Mephisto hat auch schon sein Augenmerk auf den nach seiner Meinung ungewöhnlich törichten Mann gelenkt. Er sieht mit seinem scharfen Verstand die entgegengesetzten Triebe in Fausts Brust, die zu so gefährlicher Höhe aufgekeimt sind, daß der Teufel hoffen kann, Faust durch sie für sich zu gewinnen. Frech spricht er zu dem Herrn:

„Was wettet ihr? Den sollt ihr noch verlieren,
Wenn ihr mir die Erlaubnis gebt,
Ihn meine Straße sacht zu führen."

Nach seiner Ansicht wird Faust, weil er die Forderung übermäßig hoch stellt, auf ihre Erfüllung schließlich verzweifelt verzichten. Sein Streben wird ermatten, und er wird sich von dem Weg des Herrn auf Mephistos Straße ablenken lassen, d. h. **er wird im Genuß gemeiner Sinnenfreuden seine irdische Aufgabe vergessen und damit vom Herrn abfallen.** Diese Rechnung ist auf eine tausendjährige Erfahrung, auf die genaueste Kenntnis der menschlichen Schwächen gegründet, und deshalb kann Mephisto es wagen, dem Herrn die Wette anzubieten. Es muß den Teufel besonders reizen, eine solche ungewöhnlich hochstrebende, von Gott aufs glänzendste ausgestattete Menschennatur zu besiegen und damit auf dem Gebiet zu triumphieren, wo ihm nach dem Willen des Herrn ein selbständiges Walten gestattet ist. Denn nach der im Faust geltenden Anschauung ist der Mensch, solange er auf Erden wandelt, den Angriffen des Teufels preisgegeben, denen er aber stets, wenn er will, widerstehen kann.

Unter dieser Bedingung wird denn auch die Wette vom Herrn angenommen.

„So lang er auf der Erde lebt,
So lange sei's dir nicht verboten.
Es irrt der Mensch, so lang er strebt."

Für seine Allwissenheit kann der Ausgang nicht zweifelhaft sein; darum sagt der Herr:

„Und steh beschämt, wenn du bekennen mußt,
Ein guter Mensch, in seinem dunklen Drange,
Ist sich des rechten Weges schon bewußt."

Scheinbar handelt er lieblos an seinem Geschöpf, indem er es der Versuchung, der Schuld und Reue mit all ihren Qualen aussetzt; allein dies alles sind doch nur Hilfsmittel, um seinen großen Zweck zu fördern und auf dem unvermeidlichen Umweg des Irrtums die Seele seines Geschöpfes mit liebender Vaterhand der Klarheit näher zu führen. Für Mephisto aber und für den Verstand, dessen höchste Potenz er darstellt, ist das Ziel unerkennbar. Er sieht nicht die weise Führung; ihm scheint die freie Wahl zwischen Gut und Böse zugleich auch eine selbständige Entscheidung des Menschen über sein Schicksal auf Erden und im Jenseits zu bedeuten. Beweisen ihm doch unzählige Fälle, daß menschliche Schwäche zum Abfall von Gott, d. h. von der durch Gottes Willen gestellten Aufgabe geführt hat. Indem der Herr die Wette annimmt, bleibt die Frage offen, ob nicht auch Faust von der Schwäche übermannt werden wird. Die Antwort muß sein Erdenwandel geben, und der Inhalt der Tragödie ist die Schilderung dieses Erdenwandels Fausts bis zur äußersten Grenze des Greisenalters.

Da wir Faust zuerst erblicken, ist er bereits ein gereifter Mann, ein angesehener Gelehrter. Die Fakultätswissenschaften: „Philosophie, Juristerei und Medizin und leider auch Theologie" geben ihm kein Genüge. Er sehnt sich nach der Erkenntnis, die sie nicht gewähren können, nach der **Lösung der Welträtsel.** Daneben aber quält ihn noch stärker der Drang, die Natur, das Leben in allen seinen Tiefen zu erfassen und zu genießen. Er ist von ihnen abgeschieden durch die dicken Mauern seines Studierzimmers. Auf das Höchste, was vor seinem Geist steht, den Gewinn überirdischer Erkenntnis, verzichtet er freiwillig, weil er einsieht, daß diese dem Menschengeist doch nur als Gleichnis, als Bild, nicht aber im Sinn einer Klarheit über die letzten Ursachen sich erschließen kann. Deshalb will er nun die Kräfte, die im Irdischen wirken, voll zu begreifen und ihr Wirken in seiner eignen Brust nachzufühlen suchen. Im Zeichen des Erdgeistes erblickt er das Symbol all dieser Kräfte. Er will nun den Erdgeist zwingen, ihm mit einem Schlag allumfassende Erfahrung zu spenden; aber vor dem Gelehrten, der über sein Studierzimmer noch kaum hinausgeblickt hat, steht das Leben in der Gestalt des Geistes als etwas überwältigend Furchtbares, nie Geschautes. Der Geist muß den großen, einzigen Wunsch versagen, weil nur eigne umfassendste Lebenserfahrung ihn zu erfüllen vermag, und Faust stürzt verzweifelt zusammen.

Mit diesen Expositionsszenen ist das Thema für das ganze folgende Drama gegeben: Abwendung von der trocknen Gelehrsamkeit und von dem Streben nach Durchdringung der Welträtsel und statt ihrer die **Betätigung aller Kräfte zum Gewinn tiefster Erkenntnis von Zweck und Inhalt des irdischen Daseins für eine aufs höchste begabte und nach dem Höchsten strebende Menschennatur.**

Aus dem an Verzweiflung grenzenden Schmerz über die höhnende Zurechtweisung des Erdgeistes: „Du gleichst dem Geist, den du begreifst, Nicht mir!“ wird Faust durch seinen Famulus, den trocknen philiströsen Wagner, der ihm mit allerhand langweiligen Fragen zusetzt, herausgerissen; aber als er ihn endlich losgeworden, da ergreift ihn die Erfahrung, daß er den heraufbeschwornen Erdgeist nicht habe halten können, mit erneutem Jammergefühl, und er kommt zu dem Entschluß, durch einen „Saft, der eilig trunken macht,“ seinem traurigen Leben ein Ende zu machen und

„Nach jenem Durchgang hinzustreben,
Um dessen engen Mund die ganze Hölle flammt.“

Schon hat er die „kristallne reine Schale,“ die einst „bei der Väter Freudenfeste“ erglänzt, mit der „braunen Flut gefüllt, an den Mund gesetzt, da vernimmt er vom nahen Dom Glockenklang und den Ostergesang der Engel: „Christ ist erstanden!“ Obwohl ihm der Glaube an die Himmelsbotschaft fehlt, ruft ihm dieser Klang doch die frohen Stunden heitrer Jugend ins Gedächtnis, wo er glauben konnte und ein Gebet ihm brünstiger Genuß war und ruft ihn jetzt zurück in das Leben.

„Erinnerung hält mich nun mit kindlichem Gefühle
Vom letzten, ernsten Schrit zurück.
O tönet fort, ihr süßen Himmelslieder!
Die Träne quillt, die Erde hat mich wieder!“

Mit seinem Famulus mischt er sich am Osternachmittag unter die fröhlich zum Tor hinausströmende Menge, Spaziergänger aller Art, und von dem Spaziergang heimgekehrt, fühlt er aufs neue in der nächtlichen Stille die Sehnsucht „nach des Lebens Quelle,“ nach „Offenbarung,“

„Die nirgends würdger und schöner brennt
Als in dem Neuen Testament.“

Ihn drängt's, den Grundtext aufzuschlagen und mit redlichem Gefühl einmal das heilige Original in sein geliebtes Deutsch zu übertragen. Sein ernstes Streben wird durch das Heulen und Bellen eines Pudels unterbrochen, der auf dem Spaziergang ihn umkreist hatte und ihm bis in sein Studierzimmer gefolgt war. Er will den „störenden Gesellen“ aus seiner Stube weisen; da wächst das Tier ganz unheimlich, hat nicht mehr eines Hunds Gestalt, sieht wie ein Nilpferd aus, mit feurigen Augen, schrecklichem Gebiß. Er beschwört das Tier mit starken Zaubersprüchen, da entpuppt es sich als Mephistopheles, der wie ein fahrender Scholastikus gekleidet ist und Faust seine Dienste anbietet. Er erklärt dem staunenden Faust, er sei ein Teil von jener Kraft, die stets das Böse will und stets das Gute schafft, der Geist, der stets verneint; allwissend sei er nicht; „doch viel ist mir bewußt,“ prahlt er.

Der Pakt mit dem Teufel.

Nach langem Hin- und Herreden, worin Mephisto den Faust immer mehr, immer gefährlicher, umstrickt, kommen sie zu einer Vereinbarung. Mephisto bietet Faust an, er wolle sich gern bequemen, sein Geselle zu sein, ihm zu dienen: „Und mach ich dir's recht, Bin ich dein Diener, bin dein Knecht." Faust aber meint, der Teufel sei ein Egoist, tue nichts umsonst; deshalb möge er seine Bedingung deutlich aussprechen. Aber schlau erwidert Mephisto: Ich will mich **hier** zu deinem Dienst verbinden, Auf deinen Wink nicht rasten und nicht ruhn; Wenn wir uns **drüben** wiederfinden, So sollst du mir das Gleiche tun." Doch Faust ist damit noch nicht zufrieden. Das Drüben könne ihn wenig kümmern.

„Aus dieser Erde quellen meine Freuden,
Und diese Sonne scheinet meinen Leiden,
Dann mag was will und kann geschehn.
Davon will ich nichts weiter hören."

In diesem Sinn, könne er es wagen, erklärt der schlaue Mephisto; mit Freuden wolle er ihn seine Künste sehen lassen, wolle ihm geben, was noch kein Mensch gesehen. So kommt der Pakt zustand. Faust aber erklärt bestimmt:

„Werd ich beruhigt je mich auf ein Faulbett legen,
So sei es gleich um mich getan!
Kannst du mich schmeichelnd je belügen,
Daß ich mir selbst gefallen mag,
Kannst du mich mit Genuß betrügen,
Das sei für mich der letzte Tag!
Die Wette biet ich!"

Topp! erwidert Mephisto. „Und Schlag auf Schlag! Werd ich zum Augenblick sagen: Verweile doch! Du bist so schön! Dann magst du mich in Fesseln schlagen," erklärt Faust. Nur dann, wenn er in dem was Mephisto ihm bieten mag, volles Genüge finden werde, dann habe er die Wette verloren, sei er Mephisto zu eigen. — Faust scheint schon halb für Mephisto reif; aber es fehlt doch noch ein ernster Schritt: nachdem er auf all die schönen Illusionen des Lebens verzichtet hat, sich zu der Lebensanschauung zu bekennen, die in der Befriedigung der tierischen Bedürfnisse den Zweck, im gemeinen Sinnengenuß die höchste Wonne des Daseins erblickt. Und dafür ist Faust noch nicht reif. Zwar will er sich mit den Freuden dieser Welt begnügen, aber im rastlosen, unaufhörlichem Wechsel, der seiner eignen Unrast entspricht. „Nur rastlos betätigt sich der Mann," bekennt er. Das stimmt nicht zu dem krassen Materialismus des Mephisto; aber dieser erfahrne Menschenkenner erhofft von den Jahren die Beruhigung des Faust, glaubt, daß er diese

hochstrebende Natur ganz zu sich herabziehen werde. Faust sucht rastlos nach irgendeiner Stelle im Leben, die ihm Befriedigung, d. h. einen Genuß vom dauerndem Wert gewährt. Mephisto bietet alles auf, um ihm diese Befriedigung durch Sinnesfreuden zu verschaffen. Faust gelangt bei diesem Suchen zu immer richtigerem Einschätzen der irdischen Werte, und am Schluß ergibt sich für ihn die Erkenntnis, **daß der einzig wertvolle Genuß im rastlosen Schaffen für andre beruht, und daß die Befriedigung im Sinn Mephistos für den Menschen, der seiner hohen Aufgabe treu bleibt, überhaupt nicht zu erlangen ist.** Das höchste Glück entdeckt er in dem, was ihn früher zur Verzweiflung trieb, in dem ewig unbefriedigten Streben. Wohl glaubt er in der Ferne das Ziel zu erblicken, aber hinter diesem Ziel tauchen jedesmal, sobald es erreicht ist, neue und bessere auf.

Fausts „neuer Lebenslauf."

In Mephistos Führung beginnt nun Faust einen neuen Lebenslauf. Für diesen stellt Mephisto das Programm auf:

„Wir sehn die kleine, dann die große Welt."

Die kleine Welt, das ist die bürgerliche Gesellschaft mit ihren engen Interessen, mit ihrer strengen Gebundenheit, die nur in sorgsam abgemessenem Genuß der Sinnesfreuden einen schmalen Ausweg ins Reich der Freiheit offen läßt. — Die große Welt ist der Bereich, wo sich die Möglichkeit zu kühner Lebensführung, zur Herrschaft eröffnet, wo der Wille zur Macht sich betätigen kann, wo die Sinne frei jedes Begehren erfüllen dürfen, weil auf der obersten Stufe der Gesellschaft mit der Herrschaft über die Masse des Volkes auch die Ueberwindung der Gesetze, die für jenes gelten, verbunden ist.

In der kleinen bürgerlichen Welt soll Faust nun Befriedigung finden. Hier ist Mephisto der überlegne Führer, und er versucht zuerst, ob Faust für die niedrigsten Freuden, die des Zechgelages in Auerbachs Keller empfänglich sei. Aber voll Widerwillen blickt er stumm dem wüsten Treiben der Gesellen zu, die ihm zeigen sollen, wie leicht sich's leben läßt. Dann wirkt die stärkste aller menschlichen Gefühle in ihrer ganzen Allgewalt auf ihn ein, nachdem er in der Hexenküche körperlich verjüngt worden ist. Wenn jetzt Gretchens holde Unschuld in Faust ein Verlangen erweckt, das unbezwinglich ist, wenn er und sie sich der unbekannten Wonne ganz hingeben und dadurch vor der Welt und dem eignen Gewissen in schwerste Schuld versinken, so scheint der Augenblick nahe, den der Vertrag zwischen Faust und Mephisto als den letzten bestimmt hat. Aber eins fehlt noch. In den Freuden und Leiden, die Gretchens Liebe spendet, ist der Triumph der gemeinen Sinnlichkeit noch nicht vollkommen; was die Liebenden mit unsichtbaren Banden anein-

ander fesselt, ist etwas Höheres, etwas Gottgewolltes, Edles, Großes. Diese Liebe vermag nicht, Faust auf die Stufe des Tieres herabzudrücken und ihn in selbstzufriednem Genießen sich selbst gefallen zu lassen.

Damit er diesen letzten entscheidenden Schritt tue, zwingt ihn Mephisto durch die Blutschuld von Valentins Ermordung, Gretchens Nähe zu fliehen, und lockt ihn zu den satanischen Freuden der Walpurgisnacht. Zermürbt, verzweifelt, selbstvergessen gibt sich Faust ihnen hin. Im Tanz mit der schönen jungen Hexe empfindet er ein Behagen, das ihn für die Lebensanschauung des Mephisto reif erscheinen läßt, wenn er in solchem Sinnenrausch zu verharren vermag. Faust ist bis zu dem tiefsten Punkt gesunken, zu dem eine große menschliche Natur von Leidenschaft und Verzweiflung hinabgerissen werden kann.

Hier liegt die entscheidende Wendung des ganzen Faustdramas. Wenn diese Mittel, über die Mephisto verfügt, nicht auf Faust zu wirken vermögen, wird er sein Ziel nie erreichen. Es waren die stärksten Mittel und Fausts Widerstandskraft schien gebrochen. Sein Streben erlosch, seine Vernunft verstummte, die Leidenschaft überwältigte ihn ganz. Aber nun erwacht beim Anblick von Gretchens Zauberbild seine Tatkraft aufs neue. Der Egoismus wird überwältigt von dem Drang, der Geliebten zu Hilfe zu eilen, die Sinne verstummen, Mephisto muß dem gebieterischen Verlangen Fausts gehorchen. Er wird Zeuge von dem Ende Gretchens im Gefängnis. Sie sträubt sich mit ihm zu fliehn, übergibt sich lieber dem Gericht Gottes. „Dein bin ich Vater! Rette mich!" fleht sie und findet Erhörung. Trotz Mephistos Hohnwort: „Sie ist gerichtet!" ruft die Stimme der Gnade aus der Höhe: „Ist gerettet." Faust bleibt an Mephisto gebunden, der ihn mit den Worten: „Her zu mir!" mit sich fortreißt. Doch klingt es ihm noch liebevoll mahnend, warnend nach aus dem Mund der Geliebten: „Heinrich! Heinrich!" Damit schließt der erste Teil.

Im zweiten Teil herrscht die Allegorie, das Symbolische, das Lehrhafte vor. Goethe selbst gesteht, daß er da viel „hineingeheimnißt" habe; anstatt individueller Menschen von Fleisch und Blut wie im ersten Teil treten uns bei einer gewaltigen Gedankenfülle Personen entgegen, die nur Versinnbildlichungen von Ideen sind. Zahllose Kommentatoren haben an diesem zweiten Teil herumgedeutet, und „dennoch wird schwerlich je alles gefunden werden, was der Dichter unter den dunkeln Rätseln hat verbergen wollen," erklärt einer von diesen. Goethe selber hat sich über die Faustdeuter aufgehalten, wie er denn einmal zu Eckermann sagte: Die Deutschen machen sich durch ihre tiefen Gedanken und Ideen, die sie überall suchen und hineinlegen, das Leben schwerer als billig. Da kom-

men sie und fragen, welche Ideen ich in meinem Faust zu verkörpern gesucht. Als ob ich das selbst wüßte und aussprechen könnte! **Vom Himmel durch die Welt zur Hölle.** Das wäre zur Not etwas, aber das ist keine Idee, sondern Gang der Handlung. Und ferner, daß der Teufel die Wette verliert und daß ein aus schweren Verirrungen immerfort zum Besseren aufstrebender Mensch zu erlösen sei, das ist zwar ein wirksamer, manches erklärender guter Gedanke; aber es ist keine Idee, die dem Ganzen und jeder einzelnen Szene im besonderen zugrund liegt."

Darum erscheint es besser, ganz kurz den Aufstieg des Faust aus den Niederungen, worin wir ihn verlassen, zu reineren Höhen, zur Vollendung zu beschreiben. — Nicht in fruchtloser Reue will Faust, nachdem er seine Energie wiedergefunden, dem Vergangenen nachweinen. Mit klarem Blick schaut er den neuen Morgen und faßt den Entschluß zum höchsten Dasein, das innerhalb dieser Welt zu erringen ist, immerfort zu streben. Wo es zu finden sei, weiß er noch nicht, und sucht es zunächst, dem allgemeinen Vorurteil folgend, am Kaiserhof. Aber er vermag hier nicht die Gelegenheit zu tatkräftigem Wirken zu finden, teils weil er hier wieder in die von ihm überwundene Welt des gemeinen Genießens gerät, vor allem aber weil er selber, um zur Tat in großem Sinn fähig zu werden, erst einer inneren Umwandlung bedarf. Dieses wichtigste Stadium der Charakterentwicklung Fausts vollzieht sich beim Anblick Helenas. Faust, der moderne nordische Mensch, ist zum ersten Mal von der Vorstellung der antiken Schönheit in ihrer überwältigenden Macht erfaßt worden:

„Wer sie erkannt, der darf sie nicht entbehren."

Er dringt ins Reich der Antike ein, er führt die Schönheit aus der Unterwelt wieder empor (in der Gestalt der Helena), er vermählt sich mit ihr: alles symbolische Vorgänge, in denen die ästhetische Bildung, also ein rein innerlicher Vorgang dargestellt wird. Das Ergebnis ist Fausts endgültige Befreiung von der Herrschaft der niedrigen Triebe und seine nun errungene Fähigkeit, die höchste Stufe des Genießens und des Strebens zu erklimmen. Als ihm Mephisto (im vierten Akt) die Sinnesfreuden eines schwelgerischen Monarchen lockend schildert, weist ihn Faust stolz zurück. „Genießen macht gemein!" ruft er ihm zu.

„Dieser Erdenkreis
Gewährt noch Raum zu großen Taten.
Erstaunenswürdiges soll geraten,
Ich fühle Kraft zu kühnem Fleiß."

„Die Tat ist alles, nichts der Ruhm."

Ihn kann jetzt nur die fruchtbare Tat reizen. In einem gro-

ßen Kulturwerk von unabsehbarer Bedeutung findet er eine würdige Aufgabe: „das herrische Meer vom Ufer auszuschließen," das so gewonnene Land fruchtbar zu machen, ist sein Ziel; er hilft dem Kaiser eine Schlacht über seine Feinde gewinnen; er legt Kolonien an, sendet Handelsschiffe aus, kurz er macht sich in segensreicher Weise um Handel und Industrie verdient. Aber auch jetzt noch ist er im Bann des Egoismus, der auch, wo er fördernd und schaffend wirkt, doch den despotischen Willen und seine Befriedigung über alles schätzt. Mephisto schmeichelt natürlich diesem Trieb, und es gelingt ihm nochmals, Faust zu schwerem Unrecht gegen seine Untertanen fortzureißen. An seinen schönen Besitz angrenzend steht die Hütte der guten alten Leute, umgeben von Lindenbäumen; dies hindert seinen freien Ausblick aufs Meer, und was er bereits geschaffen „verderbet mir den Weltbesitz," sagt er zu Mephisto, hindert „zu überschaun mit einem Blick des Menschengeistes Meisterstück."

Mephisto soll die alten Leutchen bewegen, ihr liebgewordnes Heim zu verlassen und zum Tausch in Besitz zu nehmen „das schöne Gütchen, das ich den Alten ausersah." Und Mephisto, der alte Bösewicht, steckt das Häuschen in Brand, so daß die guten Alten den Tod in den Flammen finden; selbst das Kapellchen, in dem die Glocke hing, deren Klang dem Faust immer unangenehm war, wird eine Beute des Feuers. Dies wollte Faust nicht: „Tausch wollt ich, keinen Raub" — und er flucht der Tat und dem frei gewordnen Besitz. Da schweben schaffenhafte Gestalten heran, vier graue Weiber: Mangel, Schuld, Sorge, Not heißen sie. Drei von ihnen können nicht in Fausts Palast eindringen, nicht Mangel, nicht Schuld, nicht Not, aber „die Sorge, sie schleicht sich durchs Schlüsselloch ein." Der Dichter läßt sie sagen:

„Ihr Schwestern, ihr könnt nicht und dürft nicht hinein,
Die Sorge, sie schleicht sich durchs Schlüsselloch ein."

Aus dem Rauch des durch seine Schuld verwüsteten Hauses schwebt sie heran. Schon im ersten Teil (des „Faust") ist sie geschildert als die schlimmste Feindin jedes entschiedenen Aufschwungs der Seele; bedeutungsvoll schildert sie hier am Schluß selbst ihre lähmende, quälende Gewalt. Aber wer ist diese Sorge? „Das Gewissen . . . . ist ganz nahe mit der Sorge verwandt, die in den Kummer überzugehen droht, wenn wir uns oder andern durch eigne Schuld ein Uebel zugezogen haben," erklärt der Dichter selber in den „Wanderjahren." Hier erblicken wir in der Sorge das Gewissen als selbstquälerisches, darum die Tat hemmendes personifiziert. (Das Gewissen kann aber auch eine heilsame, fördernde Wirkung haben!) Faust will sich zwar dessen erwehren, seinen Willen läßt er nicht beugen; aber er erblindet. Die Macht der Sorge will er nicht anerkennen; da sagt sie zu ihm:

„Die Menschen sind im ganzen Leben blind,
Nun, Fauste, werde du's am Ende."

Sie haucht ihn an, und er erblindet. Sein Wille kann die Tat jetzt nicht mehr mit Sicherheit leiten. Er muß erfahren, daß **wir selbst** die Dauer und Stetigkeit unsers Tuns hemmen durch die Fehler, welche begangen uns **den Blick** umnebeln und verwirren; und sein großes Werk endet äußerlich jammervoll; einen gewaltigen Kanalbau glaubt er zu leiten, und leitet nur das Schaufeln seines eignen Grabes, kläglich verspottet. Aber um so heller strahlt in seinem Innern das Licht auf, welches ihm ein neues Gebiet idealen Wirkens offenbart, das er freilich, wie Moses das gelobte Land nur noch schauen, nicht mehr betreten kann. **Die Befriedigung, die kein Genuß ihm gewähren konnte, ahnt er im Vorgefühl selbstlos idealen Schaffens.** Von allem Lebensreichtum ist ihm nur der innere Gewinn geblieben, der großartige Idealismus einer Natur, die sich mühsam durchgerungen und aus tausendfach verschlungnen Pfaden „den rechten Weg" doch schließlich gefunden hat. Denn, wie Goethe selber geschrieben:

„Ein edler Mensch in seinem dunklen Drange"
(verdunkelt durch die Irrungen, die Sündenschuld)
„Ist sich des rechten Weges wohl bewußt."

Im Abziehen sehen die Grauen von ferne den herannahenden Bruder: **den Tod.** Doch ist noch Fausts Kraft ungebrochen. Er ruft seine Knecht zu neuer Arbeit, zur Trockenlegung eines Sumpfes am Gebirge, auf — das Klirren der Spaten ergötzt ihn und er wähnt, es sei die Menge, die ihm front, und es sind die Lemuren (abgeschiedne Seelen der Verstorbenen) die sein . . . Grab graben. In völliger Selbsttäuschung sieht er im Geist das Erstrebte schon vollendet, sieht viele Millionen, die

„Nicht sicher zwar, doch tätig frei da wohnen,"

ein großes Volk, von Gefahren rings umgeben, das Leben und Freiheit täglich sich erobern muß, aber beide dadurch verdient. Er ruft:

„Solch ein Gewimmel möcht ich sehen,
Auf freiem Grund mit freiem Volke stehn.
Zum Augenblicke dürft ich sagen:
Verweile doch, du bist so schön!
Es kann die Spur von meinen Erdentagen
Nicht in Aeonen untergehn —
Im Vorgefühl von solchem hohen Glück
Genieß ich jetzt den höchsten Augenblick."

Es ist sein **letztes** Wort; kaum hat er es gesprochen, so sinkt er nieder, die Lemuren fassen ihn auf und legen ihn auf den Boden.

Mephisto triumphiert, glaubend, er habe die Wette gewonnen, Fausts Seele sei für immer sein Eigentum. Er ruft das höllische Heer herbei und heißt es, sich der fliehenden Seele zu bemächtigen. Aber Engel eilen herbei, streuen Rosen und verdrängen dadurch die Teufel und entführen „**Faustens Unsterbliches**“ in die himmlischen Gefilde.

„Mir ist ein großer, einzger Schatz entwendet!
Die hohe Seele, die sich mir verpfändet,
Die haben sie mir pfiffig weggehascht,“

jammert der arme Teufel. Die Engel aber singen:

„Gerettet ist das edle Glied
Der Geisterwelt vom Bösen;
Wer immer strebend sich bemüht,
Den können wir erlösen.

Und hat an ihm die Liebe gar
Von oben teilgenommen
Begegnet ihm die selge Schar
Mit herzlichem Willkommen!“

Also **Erlösung** und ein fortwährendes Streben nach Reinem, Edlem, „eine immer höhere und reinere Tätigkeit,“ unterstützt durch die dem Menschen zu Hilfe kommende ewige **Liebe,** wodurch die Erlösung bewirkt wird, das ist der Schlüssel zu Faustens Rettung, wie Goethe selber erklärte, ist die Grundidee zur Faustdichtung, die man **„die weltliche Bibel“** genannt hat. Ob mit Recht, bleibe dem Urteil des Lesers überlassen.

EDITORIALS

YOUNG MEN FOR ACTION, MIDDLE-AGED MEN FOR COUNCIL, OLD MEN FOR PRAYER

We don't know where the above saying originated, but if it was derived from the Book of Proverbs or some other part of the Old Testament Wisdom Literature we should not be surprised, for while it has not the force of a word of the prophets it sounds very much as though it had fallen from the mouth of one of the wise men of Israel.

Young men have open minds, their ideas are not set in fixed molds. The voice of men with high ideals finds in them a swift and emphatic response. The disciples who followed Jesus were nearly all young men. To accept him as a leader involved danger and sacrifice and yet "they left all and followed him." We see the same phenomenon today. Mussolini appealed especialy to the young people of modern Italy, those who had little to lose and were ready to forfeit this little in the service of an inspiring cause. The Hitlerites recruit themselves mostly from the youth of the country. The students seem to have been most reckless in the ostracizing of the Jews. But on the other hand, in the recent attempts of the Nazis to curb the freedom of the church and make it a mere department of the state, it was the young pastors—or some of them —who refused to carry out the dictates of the hyper-patriots. In our own country we witnessed a similar thing. When the Laymen's Foreign Mission Inquiry was under fire and had been condemned, in part, by a number of denominations, some one took it to the students of the country and they indorsed it to the number of four thousand (according to a recent report in the "Christian Century").

By making this admission we do not commend the action of the young in all cases. We only point out the fact that youth is nearly always on the side of the new idea, the new project, the change from the old. Nature has so arranged it that there are always conservers and changers. If what is good in the old was not conserved we should soon have no civilization to hand on. But if the old ideas were not adjusted to new needs and situations we should have to expect revolutions that would bury old cultures in blood and exact a thousand times more in agony and tears than would have been necessary had both sides agreed on a reasonable give and take.

Now our caption attributes the role of counselor in the warring of opposing interests to the middle-aged. They have had experi-

ence. They are not like the young who bring to the task only enthusiasm and daring. They have gone through their years not only with open eyes but with eyes sharpened by the observation that not all is gold that glistens nor everything a life-saver that is backed by expensive advertising.

Our country has gone far in holding out big plums to the young and discounting the price of experience. We have had presidents of big banks who were under thirty and presidents of large universities that were not much older. Congregations have advertised that they want a new minister and no one over thirty-five need apply. Many businesses will not employ a man over forty. It seems they value only physical efficiency and quickness of action. Experience and the skill gained b experience go for nothing. And what as to the sociological effect of such a policy? Who is to help those who are declared old at forty? This writer once applied to a place in a congregation in the middle west, in a small but prosperous town. He was told by the president that they drew the line at fifty, a man being eligible as long as he was within thirty-five and forty-nine years of age. I happened to be forty-nine so that from the standpoint of age I just barely and fairly fitted in. When the president told me that during the midday meal, a morsel of food nearly slipped into the wrong channel when I considered how close I had come to missing my chance.

If we judge correctly it's the young pastors that reap most popular applause and are worshiped by admiring youth and sentimental old ladies. Still the real work of molding minds and shaping lives is done by the older men in the pulpit. Treitschke, the great historian, used to say, the world is ruled by the men between fifty and sixty. There is truth in that; consider e.g. the fact that presidents or senators are usually in that class. Ministers, we fear, will have to do most of their real work before 60 or even 50, for when they have reached that stage the situation often becomes precarious. They'll do well to behave themselves so they don't have to change. Some other churches are more kind to them. Our own people seem to be agreed that they now would do best in the third class; *old* men for *prayer*.

Why should old men see their chief usefulness in prayer? It is not as though a man growing old slipped into a prayer habit naturally. If we look around we notice that most of them don't pray more than the younger ones. They may be more wedded to the conventional prayer language but there is no more unction in their pleading. It is seldom that a man who never really lived in prayer gets into the devotional mood by simply getting up in years. Just as it is seldom that a man gets converted who missed it when he was younger and more impressionable. Still, if the old

don't become men of prayer who will? They are coming to the end of their days. To them the reflection of the 39th Psalm comes with particular pointedness: "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."

They have been released from much of the labor that is on others' shoulders; have seen the friends of their youth pass, and so much of what occupies the attention and satisfies the interests of others is taken from them: Where shall they find compensation, quietnes of mind and uplift of soul but in the Lord and in sustained meditation? How much the world speaks of Gandhi and of other eastern mystics who spend whole days in spiritual absorption and achieve rest and peacefulness; who sanctify themselves and mortify their bodies for the benefit of others.

Some of us old ones read enough and study enough but few of us live in the very atmosphere of prayer. And yet if we did, if we learned to do it, would it not perhaps be for the quickening of the souls of those younger than we and justify our right of being a little longer in the church militant?!

"IN THE SWEAT OF THY BROW THOU SHALT EAT BREAD!"

I have been in the Episcopal Church a number of times lately. I can't say that I like it there better than I do in our own. But in a number of things they do better than our people. I attended a service in the Cathedral of this city: a magnificent masterpiece of Gothic architecture. There is much of symbolism everywhere. I won't dwell on that, but there was a silence there that was almost awesome. I thought of our Conference services and how far even some of our pastors there are from living up to what the choir sings so beautifully: "The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him."

The ritual or liturgy of the Episcopal church, as provided in the Book of Common prayer, is very elaborate. There is a deal of reading, choir and congregational singing, chanting, kneeling, rising and sitting down again. The "priest" reads two long Bible passages. All these things don't appeal to us. We can hardly understand how they can go through that Sunday after Sunday without hollowing out the whole procedure. The number of prayers the priest reads is astonishing and it is done in a kind of sing-song tone. This church was not a high-church sanctuary. Had we been in an Anglo-Catholic service we should soon have felt that these people are miles apart from us and headed straight along in a Rome-ward direction.

The minister, that Dr. Emerson, a former Congregationalist, of whom we spoke in a recent issue, read the whole third chapter of Genesis, the story of the temptation. We wondered how he would treat this more or less difficult chapter; whether he would handle it as a pictorial representation or as a real story. However, he wasted no time on that. He declared it a wonderfully simple and striking representation of the awakening of consciousness and conscience in man, and then went on to speak of his text (as given in our title). He said, God drove Adam and Eve out of Paradise, saying, in effect, you have made a failure of Paradise. Now go out into the world and *face reality*. Your task will be to make a real contribution to the world's life. It needs your share and you consider it the field of your activity.

1. The world you are going to live in is not a beautiful world altogether; there is in it a mixture of good and evil. It is in the nature of things a world which invites your very best. God has endowed you with a possibility of powers for the good, the true, the beautiful. Find out where your particular gifts lie and use and develop them to the utmost. The world doesn't need intellectuals only, or preachers, or poets, or hand-workers. It needs them all. Go and find your line and try to excel in it.

2. Don't blame others (as Adam did Eve and Eve, the serpent—Rev.) if things don't turn out right. The speaker told here how he had recently heard a commencement oration by a young man at Kenyon College (an Episcopal institution in Ohio), in which the speaker told his audience of the perilous situation of the young. The older generation, he claimed, had made a botch of things, had left them nothing, absolutely helpless, furnished no guidance, no certainty, no ideals. In other words, the young fellow proved a carping critic, nothing else. This reminded Dr. Emerson of an experience in his own college. The professor of physics was trying to make an experiment. He explained the physical laws first, then made the necessary preparations: nothing happened! A low titter ran through the class. He tried the experiment again. The same result. Now the titter turned into a laugh. Did the professor feel humiliated? No, he turned to the class, saying: "Gentlemen, the accepted law doesn't work. Can any one of you furnish a key to the problem?" No one laughed now. Dr. Emerson naturally applied the story to the present situation. He explained the accepted law, i. e., the old way, won't work: in the church, in industry, in international relations. Find a key to solve or *help solve* the difficulty. Don't be a haughty critic, try to make a contribution of your own.

3. There will be disappointments. How could it be otherwise in a confused, disrupted, selfish world. But, nevertheless, don't

think that everybody around the corner is one who wants to trip you up. There will be ever so many anxious to give encouragement, extend a helping hand, speak a loving word. There will be friends if you know how to make friends, and the way to make friends is to *be* a friend first.

4. It will be a fight with evil. It is not sufficient to go into this fight with high idealism alone. That would peter out too soon. It is said the "first Adam was made a living soul". Who ever put a higher evaluation on man? Still, don't forget what was said of the second Adam, he was made "a life-giving spirit". Only if we become partakers of the nature of the second Adam can we expect to be victorious in our fight against the evil of the personal and social life.

We were deeply impressed by Dr. Emerson's *brief* but helpful sermon. I say, *we,* for my wife was with me. She, although Catholicism or anything savoring of it, is her pet aversion, remarked that with the anticipation of a good sermon from Dr. Emerson she would be willing to go through that complicated first part again.

I don't know how his way of treating "Adam facing reality" strikes our readers. But if one were to try it this way in his own pulpit, and do it well, it might have the charm of novelty for his audience.

A FRIEND IN NEED

Mr. Fosdick in his recent book, "Religion as I see it," (see Book Review page 398) quotes the Hindu definition of religion as "a device to bring peace of mind in the midst of conditions as they are" with strong disapproval. We agree with him in rejecting this interpretation. To the Hindu, religion is a state of mind brought about by the sinking of individual desires in the deity, the conception of the deity being pantheistic. The world and humanity have no place in his religious scheme; all he does about them is forget them. He neither tries to improve his own secular condition nor that of his fellow. With sublime indifference he looks on the sufferings of the unfortunate victims of the caste system. If today Gandhi has been working heroically for the liberation of the "untouchables" that is an attitude entirely foreign to the Hindu religious spirit and has met with stern resistance from the orthodox.

No wonder, then, that Fosdick rejects such an unsocial view of religion. To the Christian, love of God expresses itself in love of man. "If you don't love the brother whom you see how can you love God whom you do not see?" And the love of the brother is not a mere passive feeling of sympathy but leads to efforts of active philanthropy. We strive to "lift the burdens of the poor". More than that, we have "social ideals"; we want to see the principles of

Christ applied to all areas of life and change conditions as they are to conditions as they ought to be.

Nevertheless, we can't always change conditions and certainly can't change them at once. And no matter what improvements the future may bring, there will always be trials, hardships, sickness, suffering, decay and death. It is a triumph of the Christian faith that it doesn't fail to give us help even if misfortune, pain and trial are not taken from us.

I go to see a young woman occasionally who lies in one of the beds of our Deaconess Hospital; it is in the department for tubercular patients. I knew her when she was just a young girl. She had a beautiful voice and often sang in our church. But of religion she apparently had little, if anything. Her marriage did not result in happiness. Years later her lungs became affected and now when in the grip of fatal disease, a "window in her soul opened towards Jerusalem". For a time she and her family found consolation in the "Tabernacle Church". When dissension disrupted this church they left it, and a little later she was received in our institution. There I found her again some time ago. She had now been sick for years. It was a pathetic experience to see this young person now confined to her bed all day. But it was an uplifting thing to see the spiritual transformation that life had brought about. Her Bible is her constant companion. I said, "do you often feel sad and lonely?" "Yes, I do," she said, "but then I take my Bible and turn to God and the clouds lift again". She has been there for many months now, with nothing but consumption around. Conditions won't change; not for the better, one fears. But when I read the 34th Psalm to her I felt the promises of the Psalms could be depended on today: "He redeemeth the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate".

Her case reminded me of another that happened when I was only a young boy, over in the home country. The sister of a friend of mine had contracted tuberculosis. She was only nineteen years of age. I never saw her but a remark that an uncle of hers made about her impressed me so much that I could never forget it. He was a teacher in one of our higher schools, somewhat critical, perhaps even skeptical. He often went to see her. He claimed that to see her on her sick-bed, not only patient but radiating happiness and peace, did him more good than many sermons of the preachers.

When I heard that, I was convinced that the victories of the Christian faith were not all confined to the Bible. I didn't know anything about the social gospel then. Still a religion that could bring peace in conditions such as those was "good enough for me".

"PRO DOMO"

Wenn wir hier „pro domo" schreiben, so meinen wir natürlich, wir schreiben im eigenen Interesse, oder vielmehr im Interesse des „Magazins." Im Juliheft haben wir unsre Leser mit der Tatsache bekannt gemacht, daß die Depression ihre Schatten auch auf unsern Pfad geworfen hat, und daß das Exekutivkomitee der Publikationsbehörde sogar mit einem eventuellen Aufgeben des Blattes rechnet. Für den Redakteur war dies natürlich eine höchst unangenehme Ueberraschung, doch hat es ihm auch wieder wohlgetan, die Briefe zu erhalten, welche er in der Julinummer veröffentlichte, und in welchen namhafte Brüder so warm und nachdrücklich für das „Magazin" und sein Fortbestehen eintraten.

Die jährlichen Berichte der Synodalbeamten und -behörden zeigen, daß fast alle unsre Blätter unter der Depression stark gelitten haben. Das „Magazin" hat 38 Leser verloren, das heißt etwa 6 Prozent. Das ist natürlich beklagenswert, aber dem gegenüber stehen andre Bläter, die in demselben Zeitraum 16 Prozent ihrer Leser verloren haben, und niemand denkt daran sie abzuschaffen.

Am 1. Januar dieses Jahres hat unser „Magazin" das sechzigjährige Jubiläum seines Bestehens gefeiert. Abgesehen von den stark lutherischen Synoden wird es schwer sein, Zeitschriften dieser Art zu finden, die eine so lange Lebensfähigkeit gezeigt haben. Darauf sollten wir doch gewissermaßen stolz sein, stolz darauf, daß in unsrer Synode immer ein Bedürfnis vorhanden war, die eigenen theologischen Flügel zu regen, und daß unsre Kirche immer bereit war, für ein solches Unternehmen die Mittel bereitzustellen, auch wenn man dabei kein Geschäft machen konnte. Auch kann nicht behauptet werden, daß das „Magazin" es unterließ, auf die Zeichen der Zeit zu achten und sich den wechselnden Bedürfnissen seiner Leser anzupassen.

Auf ein andres haben wir schon früher hingewiesen. Im Herbst, bei Gelegenheit der Generalkonferenz, wird sich unsre Synode ohne Zweifel mit den Reformierten vereinigen. Die Reformierten haben 1366 Prediger. Augenblicklich hat ihre Kirche kein theologisches Organ. Es darf doch gewiß erwartet werden, daß von diesen 1366 Pastoren ein gewisser Prozentsatz sich dem „Theologischen Magazin" zuwenden wird. Es mag das nicht sogleich geschehen, aber sobald sich die finanzielle Lage bessert, darf ein solches mit guter Zuversicht angenommen werden. Dr. Heyl, der Redakteur der „Reformierten Kirchenzeitung," und Prof. Dr. Zerbe von Dayton haben sich demgemäß ausgesprochen (siehe im Juli Editorial). Aber dabei ist selbstverständlich vorausgesetzt, daß

wir selbst zu der Sache gutes Vertrauen und genügend Wagemut haben.

Die Publikationsbehörde will naturgemäß mit sowenig Verlust als möglich arbeiten. Pastor Haefele, der Vorsitzende, schreibt mir, daß, wenn nur die Hälfte der Nichtleser sich entschließen würde, im neuen Jahr auf das „Magazin" zu abonnieren, das Defizit schon überwunden werden könnte. Wir verstehen den Standpunkt der Behörde durchaus: die Zeit fordert strengstes Zusammenhalten unsrer Mittel. Wir haben keine Zauberformel zur Verfügung, um den Lehrerkreis auf einmal sprunghaft zu vergrößern. Doch sei vorläufig unsre Bitte, daß wenigstens jeder, der augenblicklich Leser des „Magazins" ist, es auch im kommenden Jahr bleibe. Dann können wir mit gutem Gewissen auf die Unterstützung der Reformierten rechnen. Die Redakteure der reformierten Blätter haben ihre Bereitschaft ausgesprochen, für das „Magazin" unter ihren Pastoren zu werben.

Sollten wir nicht freudig die Gelegenheit ergreifen, unserm „Magazin," nachdem es 60 Jahre alle Stürme überstanden, die Möglichkeit neuen Wachstums und erweiterten Einflusses zu sichern?!

The Christian World

Laity vs. Presiding Bishop

Several months ago "The Catholic Congress of The Episcopal Church" agents secured the acceptance of an invitation to Dr. Perry, Presiding Bishop of The *Protestant* Episcopal Church to preach at "the Great Congress Mass" to be held in the new Philadelphia Municipal Auditorium, October 24th. The propagandists of this organization in due time began to make capital of their conquest and spread the news abroad. As a clever advertising stunt it commands admiration. It gave the impression that the "titular head" so-called, of the Protestant Episcopal Church was placing his approval upon their project and practices. Readers of newspapers, some Church papers and of the Congress Bulletins easily drew this inference. It was so intended. In the June issue of the Bulletin (p. 3) there is a nice large picture of Dr. Perry (size 3″x4¾″) and the Anglo-Catholic editors breveted him with the flattering title "The Most Reverend." Dr. Perry is as much of a "Most Reverend" as a Kentucky planter who never shouldered a rifle or smelt powder is a Colonel.

On (p. 3, col. 1, Bulletin, June) is the story of what is called "The great Congress Mass", announcing Dr. Perry as "Preacher" and associating with him clerical satellites whose allocution in the caste indicate the performance of a Roman Mass and the contradiction of the Protestant Episcopal service of the Holy Communion.

When this publicity began to bubble fortunately for The Protestant Episcopal Church, members of The Protestant Episcopal Laymen's Association in the Diocese of Albany felt that they should take notice of the impertinent challenge of a disloyal and comparatively insignificant minority of so-called Anglo-Catholics in this Church. The purposes of their program and its implications must offend and arouse right thinking men and women to the dangers affecting the governmental and spiritual integrities of our Church. Realizing this, the Albanian laymen requested their secretary to write a letter to Dr. Perry and forward to him a resolution expressing their reasonable opinion and convictions concerning the "Catholic" Congress and its exploitations of the office of the Presiding Bishop for the benefit of their organization.

The secretary's letter:

May 11, 1933.

Right Rev. JAMES DE WOLF PERRY, D.D.,
Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church,
281 Fourth Avenue,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Bishop Perry:—

At the direction of the Protestant Episcopal Laymen's Association in the Diocese of Albany, I enclose herewith copy of resolution protesting against your attendance at the coming so called "Catholic" Congress in Philadelphia and your celebrating any kind of Mass thereat.

I am also directed to inform you that the Protestant Episcopal Laymen's Association in the Diocese of Albany is not a part of the official organization of the Diocese, but is composed of a group of laymen who have voluntarily associated themselves together in such an association for the purpose of safeguarding the interests of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Very truly yours,
Frank Cooper, Secretary.

RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL LAYMEN'S ASSOCIATION IN THE DIOCESE OF ALBANY:

Whereas, the Members of the Protestant Episcopal Laymen's Association in the Diocese of Albany have learned through the public press that the Presiding Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church will attend a so-called "Catholic" Congress in Philadelphia in October next and there celebrate a "Pontifical Mass" and

Whereas, the militant Anglo-Catholic group in the Protestant Episcopal Church in holding such Catholic Congresses constantly flouts the doctrines and articles of Religion of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and thereby constitutes a menace to this Church; and

Whereas, the celebration of a "Pontifical Mass" finds no sanction in the official book of worship, the Book of Common Prayer, and in the Articles of Religion of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and both its celebration and attendance at such a Congress are not within the purview of the Presiding Bishop's functions:—

NOW, THEREFORE, we earnestly protest against both the celebration of any kind of Mass thereat by the Presiding Bishop and against his giving sorrow to the members of the Protestant Episcopal Church by his attendance at such Congress.

STATE OF NEW YORK }
COUNTY OF ALBANY }

I, Frank Cooper, Secretary of the Protestant Episcopal Laymen's Association in the Diocese of Albany, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate copy of the resolution duly adopted at a meeting of the association held in the City of Albany, N. Y., on the 25th day of March, 1933, and of the whole of such resolution.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand on this 10th day of May, 1933.

Frank Cooper, Secretary,
Protestant Episcopal Laymen's Association
of the Diocese of Albany.

The foregoing letter and resolution was sent to Dr. Perry at "281 Fourth Avenue." It was released for the metropolitan press (N. Y.), broadcast throughout the country by the Associated Press service and appeared in all important Protestant Episcopal Church papers.

Dr. Perry, like many a good "Bishop of Tours", was wintering in the Orient when the letter arrived. Dr. Burleson, the resourceful First Vice-President N. C. and assistant to the Presiding Bishop and masterful "pinch-hitter" for his superior officer acknowledged receipt of the Albany letter and expressed sorrow that there could possibly be any difference of opinion.

How can any one differ from our budding hierarchy? Immediately upon his return, we presume, Dr. Burleson brought this letter to Dr. Perry's attention. We can imagine a hurry call for a meeting of the official staff, including of course the Publicity Department. And, "among those present" must have been fear compelling indignation, offended dignity mellowed by hierarchical hauteur,—the result was the following example of a truly ecclesiastical defense mechanism. This Presiding Bishop's edict was released to the daily papers and Church press by the N. C. Department of Publicity in the following form:

> Publicity Department,
> 281 Fourth Avenue New York.
>
> Note to Editors: Following is a letter from Bishop Perry replying to Judge Cooper of Albany whose letter of May 11 appeared in recent issues of Church papers.
>
> June 28, 1933.
>
> My dear Judge Cooper:
>
> On my return from the Orient I have received your letter of May 11th and an enclosed resolution adopted by a group of laymen in the Diocese of Albany protesting the attendance of the Presiding Bishop at the autumn meeting of the Catholic Congress.
>
> Several months ago I accepted the invitation of the Congress to preach to a large gathering under its auspices at the service marking the centennial of the Oxford Movement, an event which is being commemorated this year by our Church throughout the world. It is to this event that your communication refers.
>
> Without entering into the question as to the propriety of any attempt by a group of persons to instruct the Presiding Bishop as to what meetings in the Church he may help by his presence, and what others he should ignore, it is important to inform you and thus to put on record that in agreement with the excellent course pursued by my predecessor, invitations from bodies of Churchmen representing every school of thought shall have my attention and when possible my acceptance. The service of the Catholic Congress is, except for its special historical significance this year, similar in character to that attended officially by the late Presiding Bishop, the Right Reverend Dr. Murray. An invitation to the annual service of the same organization was extended to me last year but necessarily declined on account of

other engagements. In my absence my place was taken by the Assistant to the Presiding Bishop. It would be obviously inconsistent and discourteous to withdraw my acceptance from an invitation to a religious service because of protest from those who are unwilling to attend it.

I am glad for the occasion which your letter has given me to state very plainly that it is my purpose to act as the Presiding Bishop of the whole Church, including representatives of every school of thought within her membership. All unbiased persons may be expected to approve this attitude.

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) *James DeWolf Perry*, Presiding Bishop.

The Honorable
Frank Cooper,
United States District Court,
Albany, N. Y.

This letter in spirit is sacerdotally arrogant. Dr. Perry may be the innocent victim of his own ignorance. He may not know what is happening tc our Church because of Anglo-Catholic disloyalties. He may not realize that the Anglo-Catholic monastic leaders or "Catholic" promoters are using him in an advertising stunt. The original Oxford Movement founders (except Newman) could not have nor would they have had commerce with these later claimants to their work. Dr. Perry seems to be guilty of a misleading euphemism when he states that the Philadelphia "Catholic" Congress represents "an event which is being commemorated this year by our Church throughout the world." It would be more correct to say that the Centenary is being commemorated in some parts of our Church throughout the world by minority groups who are using the event as a subterfuge to promote their peculiar divisive propaganda. Because of this fact and, because of the discord and disloyalty the later "Catholic" Movement has produced, the event is being commiserated and ignored by the greater, more intelligent and loyal part of our Church everywhere.

We offer no comment upon the last two paragraphs of Dr. Perry's letter, both of which are gauche and infelicitous and thoroughly discredited by the devoted and loyal group of Albany laymen.

Dr. Perry's letter received a prompt, courteous but at the same time devastating rejoinder from the Albany laymen. It was released to Dr. Perry's office, to newspapers and the Church press.

And here it is:

PROTESTANT EPISCOPAL LAYMEN'S ASSOCIATION IN THE DIOCESE OF ALBANY

June 29, 1933

Right Rev. James De Wolfe Perry, D.D.,
Presiding Bishop, Protestant Episcopal Church,
281 Fourth Avenue,
New York City, N. Y.

Dear Bishop Perry:—

Your letter of the 28th we read in this morning's press before its receipt by me.

We are very sorry indeed that you feel offended by the fact that a group of laymen of the Episcopal Church have written to you protesting against your attending a so-called "Catholic" Congress to be held by a group of Anglo-Catholic Clergy and a few Anglo-Catholic Laity where, by the celebration of a "Pontifical Mass" and otherwise the original, long-established and fundamental laws of the Protestant Episcopal Church are to be violated.

It is clear to any thoughtful Episcopalian that the ritual to be used at this Congress will be absolutely un-Episcopalian and anti-Protestant.

We feel that you do not recognize that there is a rising tide of indignation among the laity at transgressions of this nature, chiefly by Anglo-Catholic Clergy and if, as you say, you intend to represent "every school of thought" in the Church, surely you realize that you are not truly representing this large group in the church, if you attend and participate in this Congress and thereby become a partisan of Anglo-Catholic violation of the law of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

It is not a matter where responsibility can be passed back to your deceased predecessor, but the responsibility is yours and yours alone.

Very truly yours,

Frank Cooper, Secretary,
Protestant Episcopal Laymen's Association
in the Diocese of Albany.

And the end is not yet.

—*The Chronicle.*

The Prophetic Voice and the Apostolic Calling*

Dwight Bradley

The prophets of Israel established for all time a standard of ethical outspokenness. Whenever a voice is raised in behalf of social justice, national morality or international idealism, we say, almost by instinct, that it is a *prophetic voice.* Equally so, when some brave soul stands up to excoriate evil in high places, exploitation of the weak, corruption in office, abuse of privilege, racial oppression or militaristic violence—we acclaim, "He is a prophet." Whoever, therefore, speaks out openly in the name of God and in support of righteousness, is invested by general consent with the mantle of Elijah. He is pronounced a successor to Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Jeremiah!

* Commencement address delivered May 4, 1933, at Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, Calif., when Mr. Bradley received the degree of Doctor of Divinity.

In like manner, the apostles of Christ established for all time a standard of spiritual faith. Whether or not he has been ordained by the physical laying on of hands, we hold him to be spiritually in the apostolic succession who exemplifies by character and influence an unqualified dependence upon God's grace and good will as revealed in Jesus. He is recognized to be in the line that began with the disciples, was carried on by Paul, and has lengthened out during the centuries until in our time it has reached to Albert Schweitzer and Toyohiko Kagawa.

These two successions, with their complementary standards, have been joined in many cases by the personality of an outstanding individual. This was true of Francis of Assisi. It was true, in part, of Martin Luther, although his voice became less and less prophetic as he grew in power and prestige. It was true of John Fox the Quaker. It was true of Abraham Lincoln. It was true of Walter Rauschenbusch. It was true of Washington Gladden. It has been true of a good many others somewhat less well-known. It is true, I think, of Ramsay MacDonald and of Mahatma Gandhi, despite the fact that they are politically in opposition. It is certainly true of Kagawa and Schweitzer. But it has not been true of the Christian Church as a whole.

There have ben fearless prophetic voices. There have been devoted apostles of Christ. But the infrequency with which a prophetic voice has been heard in connection with a sense of apostolic calling is one of the tragic realities of history. So infrequent, indeed, has such a connection been, that today it is almost taken for granted that the two lines are separated in the very nature of things, that to be a real prophet and a true apostle at the same time is psychologically impossible.

A point has been reached, however, beyond which the continuance of a breach between prophecy and apostleship cannot well be allowed to go. Upon the field are coming today leaders who have authentically the prophetic stamp. These in growing numbers are aggressively hostile to religion as religion is commonly understood. Some of them have not gone quite so far as to repudiate religion altogether, but, like Harry Ward and Reinhold Niebuhr, are as critical of organized Christianity as men well can be who still maintain a formal relationship with the church. It seems unwarranted to suppose, therefore, that if men holding an honored and eminent position in the religious body have become disillusioned with it, others who owe it no allegiance whatever should regard it with love and admiration. To put the matter plainly, the voice of prophecy comes today at least as often from men outside the apostolic calling as from men who are in it; and not a few of those within the calling are growing increasingly restive under the restraint which religious institutions put upon their speech. We are face to face now with a revolutionary situation. There are some who think that the leadership of mankind out of the present chaos will be a leadership of anti-religious zealots. In which case, the mantle of Elijah will drop entirely away from men who speak in God's name,

and will come to rest upon those who speak only in the name of economic determinism under the aegis of a class war.

On the other hand, there was never a time when people were more hungry for spiritual food. As in Rome just prior to and during the decline, there is today a widespread search for reality in religion. The discreetly conventional approach to spiritual experience is becoming less and less popular. But interest in many kinds of mysticism and occultism is growing.

The Saturday edition of almost any metropolitan newspaper has on its page of church notices an interesting variety of advertisements that announce services of what are sometimes contemptuously called "cults." These offer every sort of religious ware; and their appeal is directed to men and women whose spiritual natures are starved and whose lives are emotionally empty. To ignore or to ridicule these so-called "cults" is sheer folly. The fact that they flourish is a sign that they are filling a felt need. We may be convinced that they supply no substantial sustenance; but even so, they must be supplying something that our conventional churches and services do not supply. Otherwise, they would not persist and proliferate as they do. Our amusement or resentment seems not to deter thousands from leaving their ancestral religious homes and going into truth centers, theosophy, rosicrucianism, vedantism, the elohistic brotherhood, new thought, spiritualism, practical psychology, and the like. Nor does our expostulation seem to interfere greatly with the success of astrologers, clairvoyants, numerologists, "cosmic seers," or showwomen like Aimee MacPherson Hutton. We have long since abandoned our warfare with Christian Science, remembering perhaps the old adage that "he who fights and runs away shall live to fight another day." Are we being forced to surrender to unconventional mysticism as we surrendered to Christian Science?

And now arises a new thing, namely, Buchmanism, or, as its adherents prefer to have it called, "The Oxford Movement." These self-styled "first century Christians" are apparently sweeping the country. A distinguished former Cabinet member and the son of a famous tire manufacturer are enrolled as enthusiastic members of the group. What, do we suppose, is the reason for this popularity? Why does the so-called "Oxford Movement" take hold as it does? Call it if you please by some clever name, dub it, as Halford Luccock has dubbed it, "the gospel to the genteels," but you can not escape the fact that there is something in it that grips people and grips them hard. Wherein lies its strength? Why does it draw thousands to luxurious hotel ballrooms where nothing but personal religion is discussed?

Palpably, its strength lies in the promise it makes to satisfy the spiritual and emotional hungers of famished people.

Whether we like it or not, we must at least agree that unless there were a hunger, and unless that hunger were in some manner being satisfied, Buchmanism would not in a few months have spread across this country from New York to the Pacific Coast, or have established itself so strongly in England, or have successfully made common cause with similar movements in Europe.

No, Buchmanism, as well as the innumerable so-called "cults," to say nothing of the movement led by Karl Barth, is not to be dismissed with a smile, a scowl, or even an epigram. They mean something. Their vogue is a symptom of something. And that "something" is nothing more or less than the great and urgent desire that people are feeling for spiritual reality.

Yet, in the presence of this great desire, our conventionally liberal ministry seems almost helpless. We have, as we confidently assert and honestly believe, a spiritual standard that is altogether higher than any other. We are, for the most part, unwilling to grant that Buchmanism is quite a complete expression of apostolic religion, although in this we may be proved wrong. Certainly we are convinced that esoteric mysticism in any or all of its phases does not offer a satisfactory substitute for the Christianity which we represent. But we are on the defensive. The gains we make are almost entirely statistical; we receive new members into our churches and add up the number with some show of pride. Our prayer-meetings, however, are pitiful. And when we are honest with ourselves we realize how parched and barren is the soil in which the souls of our constituents, with a few exceptions, are struggling to keep alive.

It is not correct to say, as we sometimes do, that people are spiritually unresponsive. They were never more responsive to spiritual reality. They are hungry and thirsty for religion. It is in us that the lack is to be found. We have no food or drink to give them. Or, perhaps, possessing a few loaves and fishes, we do not know how to perform the miracle that will feed the multitude in the desert place who have had nothing to eat.

Nevertheless, it is for reality in religion that people are searching and which they are finding in sometimes bizarre places outside the church. But this religious searching, alas, is going on independently of the prophetic leadership. Prophecy and apostleship are proceeding in opposite directions. At the very time when the prophets of social justice are beginning to lose faith in spiritual agencies and are turning to economic determinism, and methods of class war, the movements of personal spirituality seem to be tending farther and farther away from realistic contact with the mighty forces of historical change. This is an ominous thing. Here on the one hand is a world passing through the travail of economic and political rebirth, and trying to get through pretty much without the help of religion; and there on the other hand is the hunger for spiritual nourishment seeking satisfaction almost without reference to the portentous displacements of the social organism. It is very much like the situation in declining Rome: revolution and religion progressing side by side in space and time, yet psychologically without sympathy or contact. And it is due entirely to the fact that the prophetic voice and the apostolic calling have had so little connection in the past that now, when they *must* be connected in order that civilization may be saved, it is difficult to get them together!

But the breach can no longer be tolerated! There is still time to heal it and to draw the two lines into contact. This is the most pressing task before us who are involved in both the social and the spiritual issues of our day. In order, however, to do what needs to be done, we must first know how to go about it. We have simply got to understand the conditions. And we must have courage to tackle the job!

What, then, is the basic psychological difference between the prophet and the apostle? And how can that difference be eradicated? Then, what is lacking in the modern liberal Christian which needs to be restored? What can be learned from the so-called cults, or from Christian Science, or from the "Oxford Movement," or from Barthianism, which will enable the liberal ministry to fulfill its apostolic function? These are the questions to be answered.

The fundamental difference between the prophet and the apostle is one of emphasis. The *prophet* is concerned primarily with the *social environment.* The *apostle* is chiefly interested in the *individual soul.* Here lies the root of the problem.

The typical contemporary prophet seems to take for granted the inherent goodness of men as individuals and to believe that an improvement in social conditions will give the inherently moral man a chance to fulfill himself. He is inclined to attribute personal misbehavior to a crippling environment. To change the environment is, therefore, the first and most pressing thing to do.

The typical modern apostle, however, looks at the matter otherwise. In his opinion, the individual is himself to blame for bad social conditions under which he lives. The evils of society are due, he thinks, to evils issuing from inwardly maladjusted lives. Wrong-hearted and wrong-minded people produce wrongly built institutions. The very existence of a misbehaving world proves that it contains too many misbehaving men and women. The first and most pressing thing to do, therefore, is to change the individual. After this has been done the problems of society will take care of themselves. Clean men up inside and they will clean civilization up outside.

When Reinhold Niebuhr chose the title for his latest and perhaps most brilliant book, "Moral Man and Immoral Society," he showed himself to be (as he has always been known to be) a man whose prophetic interest is primary. But had his interest been primarily apostolic, he would have written a book and called it "*Immoral* Man and *Moral* Society." That is, he would have felt it necessary to defend the established institutions of civilization against attacks carried on against them by bad and dangerous radicals! Instead of trying to show how handicapped we all are by the immoral economic and political set-up in which we live, he would have tried to prove that our essentially good and stable political and economic structure is being undermined by base and selfish and irresponsible perverts.

It is no wonder, then, that men like Niebuhr and Ward, with so decidedly a prophetic point of view, should accuse the apostolic type of being in league with a corrupt *status quo.* Nor is it any wonder that men whose whole mind is fixed on saving individual sinners should

look with suspicion on men like Ward and Niebuhr, who, in their opinion, are going at the problem from the wrong end, and are thus confusing the issue.

This is the basis of the old dispute between preachers of the social gospel and personal evangelists. Today we call it the difference between radicalism and individualism. And the pity of it is that, as we have already pointed out, the radicals grow less and less interested in personal religion, and the individualists become more and more cool toward the social gospel. If the trend apart continues very much longer, we shall see a state of affairs in which the great and needed changes in social structure will be carried on by prophets who have forgotten God, while the profound and necessary conversions of individual character will be attended to by apostles who have forgotten God's kingdom! No one with any perspective can look forward to such a *denouement* with equanimity. It would mean nothing less than the decadence of culture and another period of dark ages.

How, then, can this tendency be arrested and the widening divergence between prophetic and apostolic viewpoints be closed? How, for example, can the position of Niebuhr and Ward be brought into closer relationship with that of Frank Buchman and Sam Shoemaker?

It could be done if the prophet and the apostle together were to orient themselves so as to see life more as a whole. To do so would require sufficient objectivity to enable them to stand off, as it were, and look at things with a certain analytical detachment, until the entire view should be printed indelibly on their minds. Afterward, they could safely let their subjective loyalties take command once more; because from that time on they would realize that the prophetic voice and the apostolic calling stand in reality for two aspects of God's single purpose in the world.

We are sorry for reasons of space we can't give the whole of this article from the *Christian Leader*.

Book Review

NOTE—*Reviews, when not signed, are by the Editor.*
(When ordering books, please mention this Magazine.)

For Sinners Only, by *A. J. Russell.* Harper & Brothers Publishers, New York & London, 1932. 293 pages.

This book gives us the history and working methods of the Oxford Group Movement. It is by an English newspaper editor, who first was interested in it for professional reasons but later got to be an enthusiastic admirer.

He naturally has a great deal to say about the human engineer of the Movement. Frank Buchman had been trained at the Mount Airy Seminary, Philadelphia, for the ministry in the United Lutheran Church. His first field was a mission church in Philadelphia. It grew steadily under his nurture. He started a hospice for young men (something like a Y. M. C. A.) and a Settlement House. After five years financial difficulties developed. The board demanded retrenchment; he resigned. He set out on travels, came to Keswick, England, where a convention was in progress. Here a miracle happened which changed his whole life and started the movement whereby Buchman became a Christian worker of the first magnitude. True to tradition, it did not happen at the great convention, or at some important church service addressed by a notable preacher. It was a tiny village church and a tiny congregation. The speaker—a woman! No thunder, no lightning, no cloud, no supernatural voice, but a simple straightforward, conversational talk to a gathering of about seventeen persons, including Frank Buchman. The woman speaker spoke about the Cross of Christ, of the sinner and the One who had made full satisfaction for the sins of the world.

"The woman's simple talk," say Buchman, "personalized the Cross for me that day and suddenly I had a poignant vision of the Crucified. A strong current of life had suddenly been poured into me. With a deeper experience of the love of God in Christ and the new sense of buoyant life that had come, I returned to the house feeling a powerful urge to share my experience." (See the story of Buchman's change of life also in Begbie's "Life-Changers.") "Frank had undertaken a crusade to be absolutely for the absolute: to live the life which all Christians held, but few constantly essayed. To the average man a decision to let God so deal with sin that he would accompany him every day, every where, is a terrifying thought. To Frank it was the only logical step. It was the starting point from which Abraham, Paul, Francis, Booth, Miller, Moody and the other religious leaders all moved forward to great achievement."

Some Rhodes scholar introduced Buchman to a group of Oxford students and now began his connection with Oxford from which the whole movement received its name. If there was any place, any environment that seemed uncongenial to everything Buchman stood for and to his way of putting the Christian message, it was Oxford. Here was the intellectual center of England and the students were anything rather than sentimental or pious. Nevertheless, they responded to the approach of a man who talked of the Holy Spirit as though to him this Spirit was a fundamental fact. Without in any way losing their manliness or their naturalness, they accepted Buchman as a messenger of God who had led them into a new reality of the Christian life.

The book now goes into a description of Buchman's methods of work and the main ideas that comprised his intellectual and religious program. Most of them are by now well known to us. The fundamental spiritual act is the self-surrender. Under the Spirit's convicting influence man comes to feel his sin. Repentance (which means "feeling sorry enough to quit sin") leads to confession, forgiveness, self-surrender. A changed man wants to share his experience with others. He becomes a life-changer. His life from now on is under God's guidance. The "Quiet time" in the morning is not only one of meditation and prayer but also one where the Christian gets his guidance for the day. He walks by faith, which means he bets his life that God will be with him. Christ's command that one should seek the kingdom of God and his promise that all other things would be added to him, has to be followed literally. If one seeks the kingdom, God provides the necessities. Buchman and other leaders have no salary. Of course, most of the workers do their witnessing on the side, having other occupations to make a living with.

Reading the book one will get the impression of the "pragmatic" nature of the work of the Oxford Group. Buchman says, argument won't convince anybody. It's the results, the changed lives that tell, and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. The Movement has not contributed anything to theology; they never claimed it had or that such had been their object. Even Bible study in itself has received no special furtherance. God enters human life, changes and uses it, that is about all the Oxfordians ring the changes about. It is an important message but one comes to feel that their range of ideas is a very circumscribed one.

Nevertheless, the work that they are doing seems good and necessary. There is on one side the Liberal who excludes the supernatural and deals only with Christian idealism, and on the other side Barth who proclaims that we can never get hold of God (finitum non capax infiniti). Both are going to extremes, and here is Buchmanism, in spite of Liberal and in spite of Barth, preaching that God enters human life, changing it supernaturally and giving real bread to the hungry and life to those who are without God. Their voice has gone out into many lands, China, South Africa, South America, North America, Germany, Holland and so on. Shall we say, with Barth, they are living in a fool's paradise, or, with the Liberals, they forget the Social Gospel?

Read this book and you will perhaps conclude that if you had had something of Buchman's experience and power to witness, your ministry would have been a more fruitful one.

Albert Schweitzer: Out of My Life and Thought. An Autobiography. Translated by C. T. Campion, M.A., Oriol College, Oxford. Henry Holt & Company, London, 1933. 258 pages.

We heard of Albert Schweitzer first through Dr. Dibelius when he visited us in 1921. He told us of the wonderful versatility of the man, of his success as a scholar (in theology); of his virtuosity on the organ; his turning to the study of medicine, when fame began to be his, in order to minister to the negroes of equatorical Africa, and his successful labors there. Since then we have all heard much more of the man. The world has come to see in him one of its most distinguished men and Christianity one of its most devoted and self-sacrificing witnesses. No wonder that his autobiography now appearing (the German title: "Aus meinen Leben und Denken") is greeted with enthusiastic acclaim in many lands.

He was born in Alsace, as the son of the Protestant pastor of Günsbach, in 1875. The musical talent in his ancestry asserted itself in the boy; when only nine years old he already played the organ at a church concert. All through his life he kept close to this beloved instrument, even in the primeval forest of Central Africa, becoming at an early age one of the leading Bach interpreters of the time. In the "gymnasium" he did not particularly distinguish himself. But when advancing to the university (at Strassburg), he soon showed his ability for thorough study and independent thought. Holtzmann, the scholar who first proposed the view that Mark's was the oldest gospel and that the other Synoptics built on him, influenced him most. He completed his studies in Paris, where he heard Sabatier and Ménégoz. At the same time he formed a close attachment to Widor, the great organ artist and teacher.

After his university years he worked as assistant pastor to a church at Strassburg. But it was evident that he was cut out for an academic career. When the examination for the licentiate was successfully passed he was given various chances to teach at the university on different subjects.

Schweitzer was always a liberal theologian as his father had been before him. His first literary venture was, in accordance with the prevailing tendencies, on the question, what kind of a man was Jesus and what did he teach? It came out under the title, "The Quest of the Historical Jesus" (1906). Here Schweitzer contended that Jesus had the eschatological outlook altogether. While the liberal theologians taught that Jesus was a spiritual Messiah who tried to win his people away from their secular Messianic view, Schweitzer claimed that Jesus shared the prevailing popular ideas in all their externality. When he sent out the seventy he expected that persecution would fall upon them and that the kingdom of heaven would be revealed before they

came back. Jesus was therefore, according to Schweitzer, mistaken on this important issue, but he fit into this scheme his ethical program as outlined in the Sermon on the Mount. It was due, he says, to this limitation of Jesus' outlook on future developments that he paid no attention to social questions, to science, art, or anything that would be the concern of one who counted on long periods of historical growth.

Schweitzer's reputation as an organist kept step with his scholarly achievements. He not only excelled as an organ player, but gave the matter of organ-building a great deal of time and effort. His opinion and skill in this direction was sought and employed by countless individuals and churches. The old organs, or many of them, seemed to him of better tone quality than those newly built, in spite of their many new attachments and greater size. The traditions of the French appealed to him more in this respect than those of the Germans.

The *great turning point*, however, of his career came when he decided to drop his science and art and go to Africa to serve the negroes. The world was astounded that he should so bury his great talents and go to the primitives to do a work that ordinary people could do. Schweitzer had come to this conclusion years before. He had felt that in return for the many blessings he enjoyed he should engage in a ministration of love that would benefit some of the least privileged of the race. A paper of a Paris missionary society induced him to concentrate on equatorial Africa where that society was working. When he came to be thirty years of age he matriculated at the medical faculty of Strassburg University. Six years of hard labor followed, in medical work as well as in lecturing and organ concerts. The orthodox mission societies did not fancy the idea to send a man into the heathen world who was an out and out liberal. He could only get their favor when he told them he would go there simply as a doctor. In 1913 he started out for *Lambarene*, Africa, on the edge of the primeval forest. We haven't the space to even sketch the wonderful work he did there as a doctor and surgeon during three periods he spent in the dark continent. He built a hospital there, showing surprising talent for practical work and the handling of primitive people. Soon the War came and Schweitzer and his wife were interned in Southern France. When he could go back to Africa he found all his buildings decayed. He had to erect new ones, the money coming from the organ concerts he had given before he went back and from his many friends. The Paris Bach Society sent him an organ built for the tropics and so he kept in constant practice.

At the same time his interest in scholarly work never let up. The relation between civilization and ethics held him in its grip for years. Civilization meant to him progress in the ethical line as well as in invention and the mastery of nature. A long time he was looking for a principle or a motive power that could give the ethical supreme place while also including the interest in material progress. He found it in "Reverence for Life" as he called it. By this he not only meant human life or personality, but *all* life. If we cultivate our own life and

protect, promote and enrich the life of our fellow-men, we are serving the cause of real civilization. Schweitzer thought he had found in this slogan the key to the great problem. He endeavors in the book to give us an idea of the far-reaching effects of his viewpoint, but this writer must confess that such a general idea as "reverence for life" can't give him much light and leading on the vast subject. Schweitzer is a Rationalist throughout. He admires the ideas and objectives of the Age of Enlightenment ("Aufklärung"). He thinks that every one must get a philosophy of life by his own thinking and not take it on authority, as passed on to him by tradition or the theology of the church. The truth, he says, that the ethical is the essence of religion is firmly established on the authority of Jesus (1 Cor. 13: 13). The Sermon on the Mount is his "creed" of Christianity. "It is the incontestible charter of liberal Christianity." When he preaches he speaks on the "wonderful sayings" of Jesus and Paul, he doesn't preach "the gospel" in our sense. Jesus is the man who was an embodiment of the Spirit of Love; whosoever really loves is of his own.

In a way this is all true, but we believe more is needed. We believe that what the gospel of John says of Jesus is true and is essential. Schweitzer considers this gospel an idealization of Jesus for which later stages of development were responsible.

We have then in Schweitzer a man whom the orthodox would call a "negative" theologian. Nevertheless we have in him also a man who in practical Christianity, in devotion and self-sacrifice reminds us of the early Christians and who ranks with the "saints" of the Christian past, but is a saint who does his full share of the world's work and carries out his part of the social program of Christ.

He has consumed his wonderful physical and mental powers in the service of humanity. John Haynes Holmes, the Liberal, while he praises his humility, calls Schweitzer's life and work "Almost a miracle." But who—Liberal or Conservative—would not praise God that in Schweitzer we are made aware that the Spirit of Jesus has the same creative power in the twentieth century it had in the first?

The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle, by *Albert Schweitzer*, Dr. Theol., Dr. Med., Dr. Phil. (Strasbourg). Translated into English by Will Montgomery, B.D. With a Prefatory Note by F. C. Burkitt, F.B.A., D.D. New York, Henry Holt & Comp. (From the German, "Die Mystik des Apostels Paulus.") 1931, 411 pages.

In his "Quest of the Historical Jesus," Schweitzer had to decide among other things, whether Jesus was supposed to hold the eschatological world view pure and simple or whether there was in his teaching a mixture of eschatological and non-eschatological ideas. He decided on the former course. Jesus, according to him, was an out and out eschatologist. His ethics as presented in the Sermon on the Mount is an "Interim-Ethics." Its demands can only be justified and are only practicable on the supposition that this aeon is soon to vanish away. The absence of all interest in the affairs of this world, in what

we call civilization; the complete indifference to a new social order is conditioned on the belief in the immediate establishment of the Messianic Kingdom. Jesus, when sending out the seventy (Mat. 10) foretells the coming of great tribulation *at once*, but the fact of the matter is that they did not experience anything of the kind. In Mat. 24, Jesus makes the end of the world to follow on the heels of the tribulation leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem. He says pointedly, "this generation will not pass before all these things will be fulfilled."

In this position Schweitzer differed strongly from most of the liberal scholars of his type. These were as a rule agreed that there were eschatological elements in his teachings but also that it was well possible to read the principles of a social ethics and a kingdom of God development into them or out of them. We believe that Schweitzer overstressed his point, and that he e. g. is wrong in rejecting II Thessalonians because in that letter Paul prepares his readers for a delay in the second coming of the Lord. The latest development in this matter is the stand taken by Karl Barth, who not only makes Christ an eschatologist but gives to eschatology a place of central importance. Schweitzer doesn't even mention Barth, strange to say; in his opinion the eschatological world view is completely obsolete to us. But the question arises, if Paul was a strict eschatologist how can we explain the fact of his great influence among the Greek Gentiles to whom the idea of a speedy termination of this world and a transformation of its nature was utterly foreign? The answer is that Paul made Christ so absolutely central and the relation of the Christians to him so unique and close that it survived the abandonment of the eschatological viewpoint. This he did by what Schweitzer calls his "Mysticism." There is a primitive mysticism which attempts to put man in touch with the higher powers by certain kinds of ceremonies, bringing about a magic contact. And there is an intellectual mysticism which endeavors to sink the individual mind in the universal by concentration and absorption. Paul's mysticism is different from either. The task of unifying the temporal with the eternal, the human with the divine hinges entirely on the mediation of Christ. What Christ achieves for the believer is not a God-mysticism, it is a Christ-mysticism: Paul never says, the Christian is *in God*, he invariably speaks of him "*being in Christ.*" The historic personality of Christ reveals the nature of the God whom man seeks and opens the way to union with him. A God-mysticism is always in danger of absorbing the personal identity of the God-seeker in the absolute God. The Christ-mysticism sees in God not only the all-including world spirit, but the God who "wills to love," him who possessing personal (or superpersonal) qualities enters with men into a relation which has for its goal the establishing of a kingdom of God.

Here, we say, Christ has the all-important position of mediator. The terms in which Paul describes this (by Schweitzer called) mystical relation (or fellowship) are Paul's great contribution to the Christianity of the future. He says the Christian *dies* and *rises with Christ.* He is then *in* Christ, receives the Holy Spirit. He is a member of the

Kingdom of God, which begins with Christ's death and resurrection. He has already the new nature as a citizen of the new world although the new world delays to come. He is no longer under the law, for the law was given by the angel powers to subjugate man. But by the atoning death of Christ man has forgiveness of sin, is justified and freed from the bondage of the law. These gifts of God in Christ are so great, the liberation of the spirit is so entrancing an experience, that the continuation of the "status quo" can be borne with patience and even with joy. Paul, according to Schweitzer, has no message of social regeneration or readjustment. He engages in no emancipation movement. The Christian indifferent to the allurements and prizes of the world is sure of his being a citizen of the Messianic Kingdom.

In spite, however, of Paul's almost ecstatic detachment from the ways and interests of the world, he undergirds human relations with such an inspiring ethics of love, he gives such wise and helpful practical counsel that his eschatological views never conflict with the duties of the present time or tempt him to a premature assumption of an angelic existence.

Because Paul makes Christ and the Christ-experience so altogether central, his influence in the heathen world did not suffer although his eschatological position did not carry over. It was inescapable that when his churches were planted in the Greek world a "Hellenization" process would soon set in. The Christian apologists of the post-apostolic era, like Justin, Ignatius and others would try to adjust the gospel to Greek thought forms. But Schweitzer is very insistent in his claim that this Grecianizing of the original Christian message did not begin with Paul. He prepared the church for it by breaking Jewish narrowness, its bondage to the law; by universalizing the claim of Christ and by what was said of his mysticism, but he remained unaffected by the contents of the Greek world view.

When that Hellenization began and Paul's eschatology was dropped, with it there was also given up the kingdom of God idea that had always been at the bottom of the eschatological hopes. The Greek world adopted the belief in the redemption of the individual through Christ. It laid especial stress on the resurrection of Christ in so far as it seemed to offer a solid guarantee of the immortality of the soul that had been such a favorite thought of Greek philosophers. The Kingdom of God, however, so central in prophetic teaching and in Jesus' own message, soon dropped into disuse. (By the way, Schweitzer makes the kingdom idea also an essential part of Paul's gospel because contained or presupposed in his acceptance of the late-Jewish eschatological views. This position is not shared generally. As a rule it is taken for granted that with Paul the *church* moves into the place of the kingdom.) Schweitzer rightly deplores this eclipse of the Kingdom of God belief. He says it was not characteristic only of the Greek world, it continued all through the history of the church. Our own times have witnessed a resurrection of this fruitful idea. But, he goes on to say, because the social gospel preachers have neglected the cultivation of Christ's interest in the individual soul "we are con-

stantly in danger of giving our allegiance to an externalized Kingdom of God belief, as though anyone could do anything for the Kingdom of God who does not bear the Kingdom of God within him."

Schweitzer classes with those who Hellenize the gospel to make it acceptable to the Greek mind, the Gospel according to John. He says, the Greek apologists are characterized by a union-with-Christ mysticism into which they insert the doctrine of Jesus Christ as the organ of the Logos. This is set forth with admirable completeness in the *Gospel* of *John*. It was impossible to refer to the words of Christ for all their peculiar ideas. But Paul already had made the claim that some of his knowledge was revealed to him by the glorified Christ. The Hellenistic mysticism felt the necessity of being able to appeal to the preaching of Jesus. "A great unknown, therefore, probably about the beginning of the second century, claimed the right to supply in appropriate fashion the missing material, and write a gospel in which Jesus appears as the Logos-Christ and preaching redemption as the working of the Spirit which was to be experienced by union with himself. The extra material is explained as the report of a disciple of Jesus who remembered mysterious hints in the discourses, which the others, not understanding him, had not noted." That is the way in which, according to Schweitzer, the Gospel of John came to be written. Schweitzer has many striking things to say about this gospel. But it seems to us more natural that the real John, the disciple of Jesus, as an old man and after coming in contact with the Greek world and its thought, should have written his mystic gospel, than to ascribe it to a great "unknown," in the second century, who manufactured it for the benefit of his contemporaries, sailing under the false colors of an assumed disciple of the Lord.

Paul is to Schweitzer the apostle par excellence. "His Christ-mysticism," he says, "so far as its spiritual content is concerned, remains valid for all after-times. As a fugue of Bach's belongs in form to the eighteenth century, but in its essence is pure musical truth, so does the Christ-mysticism of all times find itself again in the Pauline as its primal form."

And again: "Paul vindicated for all time the rights of thought in Christianity. Above belief which drew its authority from tradition, he set the knowledge which came from the Spirit of Christ. There lives in him an unbounded reverence for truth. He is the patron-saint of thought in Christianity. And all those think to serve the faith in Jesus by destroying freedom of thought would do well to keep out of his way."

In these words Schweitzer states his own creed as a scholar. As the liberal thinker we have come to know him in his books and his biography. We don't always agree with him. Still, when we most decidedly disagree we qualify our disagreement by the consideration that of all real Christians he is one of the best, measured by the standard of consecration and self-sacrifice.

This book will reward careful perusal with new insight flashing from many unexpected places. One will also be amazed and puzzled

to picture to himself how the author could find time and perseverance to write a book of more than four hundred closely printed pages on a subject requiring such careful and prolonged research.

As I See Religion, by *Harry Emerson Fosdick.* Harper and Brothers, Publishers, New York, 1932. 201 pages, $2.00.

The case for religion does not seem to be so very satisfactory at the present time. The scientist is narrowing the field where religion used to have full sway to an ever decreasing area. The man in the street treats it with indifference and almost contempt; and the church people themselves are plainly worried. Nevertheless the human race has never gotten along without religion. Times of religious unrest and decay have been followed by revived interest in it. It can be said without exaggeration that religious questions are being asked in the literature of today perhaps more than ever before. Is there a God and what kind of a God? is a query that may receive different answers but its insistent frequency shows that it cannot be passed by as being of no consequence. According to Fosdick religion (or its representative, the church) has often been itself at fault in this matter. The dogmatism of the church, or its institutionalism, or its claim of a literal, verbally inspired Bible, or its supernaturalism have been stumbling blocks in the path of faith. If the situation is to be improved the church must use the broom before its own door. It is necessary to understand what is essential—religion in general and the Christian in particular, in order to find for it a safe place in this modern world.

Our age is not interested in dogma, Fosdick goes on to say, or philosophy. The conflicting claims of different church bodies arouse but resentment in the outsider. Religion can prove its worth only as a spiritual experience. If it is helpful in making the individual a better person, better able to fill his role in human society it will get a hearing. Or, in other words, if religion seems to be a decisive factor in making possible the *good life*, then its place in the future is assured.

Now the Christian religion would seem to meet these requisites better than all other faiths. Life, abundant life, the life of love, the loyalty to high ideals, this is the very breath of the Christian faith. What distinguishes the Christian faith from all others is, according to Fosdick, its *reverence* for personality. Jesus was the champion of personality. "In personality's divine origin, spiritual nature, infinite worth and endless potentialities the Christian religion is decidedly anthropocentric." The ways of God may not always be clear but ultimately his purpose focuses in the establishment of a community of a redeemed and ethical society. Jesus as the Son of God symbolizes the Father in the best personal life we know. The life of the true Christian must survive according to Emerson's logic: "What is excellent, as God lives, is permanent."

Fosdick gives a chapter, and a good one, to modern Humanism. The humanists think they can get along without God. The good life can be lived without religious motives and sanctions. It exerts its

potency by the pull of its ideals. Religion is only a defence mechanism whereby we translate our own desires and hopes into the cosmic fact of a divine father. As one of them says, "we are only clothing the naked physics of the world with our fantasies." B. Russell claims that omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way . In a cosmos negligent of human values, personality has evolved and will ultimately perish. "Living is only a physical process with only a physical meaning." (Krutch). "The most tragic event in the history of the universe is that man should ever have become conscious of himself."

Over against that Fosdick contends with Haldane, that personality is the great central fact of the universe. Theism in attributing to God personality is really a value judgment as to the worth and meaning of personality. Of course, he says, much of our popular belief in God is not moral but immoral. We expect him sometimes to abrogate the laws he has made for our benefit. Or we believe in an irruption of the supernatural into the natural world, although supernaturalism ought to be to us an obsolete word. (By the way, Reviewer does not subscribe to that. God is a transcendental fact in spite of his immanence, and therefore supernatural, even if our ways of approach to him are natural. Prayer is supposed to be communion with God. If there is no supernatural, prayer is nothing but a psychological exercise.)

Are people fooling themselves, Fosdick asks, when they try to believe in God in order to make a pitiless world seem fatherly? Careless of the facts of the universe, are they trying by imaginative facts to wrangle out of life a temporary peace of mind? Is it true that religion needs no longer to be disproved, is it merely a psychological process to be explained? Is it nothing but a chloroform mask into which the weak and unhappy stick their faces? Against these dreary objections of the doubter and unbeliever Fosdick tries manfully to defend theism by showing the reasonableness of positing a personal factor back of a world where personality is the central fact and by pointing out that religion has always been a vital and inescapable endowment of the human mind.

The author, however, reaches his height when in the closing chapter he takes up the claim that morality can well subsist and thrive without the sanction and dynamic of religion. He grants the claim that there are many good and moral men who have no religion. A man doesn't turn into a criminal, he says, as soon as he loses his faith in God. A man's morals may survive religion for a time; but what is seriously affected, he remarks significantly, is his morale. And then he cites numerous instances which show how true this is. Atheism, he explains, is for the most part *caused emotionally*, not intellectually. There is some grief, disappointment, heavy burden that causes a man's power of resistance to break. Religion being his attitude and response to the whole of life, he loses it and sinks into the slough of despondency. In time this affects his whole nature, it is a blight whose deadening effect nothing escapes. There is a logical kinship between thorough going irreligion and a lowered enthusiasm about life. Anatole

France is quoted, who although rich and successful yet cries out: "There is not in all the universe a creature more unhappy than I. I have never been happy for one day, not for a single hour."

On the other hand, "a religious man's vital conviction concerning the world he lives in is germinative, fecund, creative. It raises life's temperature. No one doubts that many virtues and satisfactions grow in any clime, but the things the religious man cares for will grow only in a world of which God is the living Spirit.

"Men find it difficult to believe that personality with its endless possibilities is a cosmic inadvertence; seeking integrated experience within themselves, men resent the inward disruption of a human life morally significant in a cosmos morally meaningless. All passionate goodness is forever unreconciled to an ethically senseless world."

How true these concluding words. And how convincing the whole argument of the book. We make our abatements here and there, but in following the author's keen reasoning, luminous statement and striking illustration one can understand why he has for years drawn so many under the spell of his influence by his pen as by his spoken word.